DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 401 678 EC 305 168

TITLE	Their World, 1996/1997.
INSTITUTION	National Center for Learning Disabilities, Inc., New York, NY.
PUB DATE	96
NOTE	132p.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Center for Learning Disabilities, 381 Park Avenue, South, Suite 1420, New York, NY 10016; fax: 212-545-9665; telephone: 212-545-7510.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
JOURNAL CIT	Their World; 1996-1997
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Art Education; Attribution Theory; Child Rearing; *Creativity; *Educational Practices; Elementary Secondary Education; Emotional Development; Inclusive Schools; Language Arts; *Learning Disabilities; *Parent Attitudes; Personal Narratives; *Student Experience; Student Needs; Teaching Methods; Teaching Models

ABSTRACT

The 26 articles in this annual on learning disabilities (LD) are organized into the following categories: research articles, educator resources, educational practices, creativity, professional insights, the LD experience of youth and adults, explaining LD to a child, and parents' trials and tribulations. The articles are: "National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Research Program in Learning Disabilities" (G. Reid Lyon and Duane Alexander); "Getting Research into the Classroom" (Donald Deshler and Jean B. Schumaker); "Building Bridges: The Parents' Educational Resource Center (PERC) Spans Gaps in Knowledge of LD" (Alexa Cortes Culwell); "The Challenge of Inclusionary Education: A Collaborative Model" (Angela M. Wilkins); "Systematic Language" (Jane Fell Greene); "Teaching Tolerance" (Harriet Arnold); "On Teaching Shakespeare to Students with LD" (Terry D. Cowgill); "Succeeding through the Arts" (Sally Smith); "Art and Music as Stress Busters for LD Children" (Tammy LeNeve); "Stages of Learning: The Performing Arts as a Teaching Tool" (David Lightfoot); "Revealing the Hopes of Adolescents through the Art of Tattoos" (Michael Gerrish); "Learned Helplessness and Attribution for Success and Failure in LD Students" (Nicki Arnold); "A Student's Need for Understanding" (Regina G. Richards); "Defining the Self as a Learner for Children with LD" (Augusta H. Gross); "My Story" (Matt Rehring); "On the Road to College" (Mimi Cooper); "Labels" (Ryan Foshay Hanson); "Facing Facts" (Kate Eklund); "The Effects of Learning Disability on One's Life" (Anonymous); "Reading My Way" (Frances Byfield Pitts); "Explaining LD to a Child" (Belinda Schilling-Leach); "Unicorns and Magic Boxes" (Judy Levitt and Jessica Levitt); "Letter to Our Son" (James Sollars and Claire Sollars); "A Walk with Denial...A Parents' Friend" (Diane Purchase); "Growing Up Successfully" (Jacqueline J. Kingon); and "The Road Taken" (Nicki Arnold). Also provided are a summary of federal laws and a list of suggested resources. (DB)

Their World

NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES 1996/1997

ED 401 678

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Schuler
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Translating Research into Practice

■

Learning Through Creative Arts

■

'For My Child'- Parents' Personal Journeys

■

NCLD's Expanded Resource and TIPS Sections

EC 305 168

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FACTS ABOUT LEARNING DISABILITIES

Millions of children and adults across the United States suffer from learning disabilities (LD). Neurological in origin, learning disabilities affect a person's ability to store, process and/or produce information. Learning disabilities can affect one's ability to read, write, speak, or compute math, and can impair socialization skills.

Individuals with LD are of average or above average intelligence, but the disability creates a gap between ability and performance.

Early diagnosis and appropriate intervention and support are vital for individuals with LD. Without early and adequate identification and intervention, learning disabilities can lead to serious consequences for individuals and for society — including loss of self esteem, school drop out, juvenile delinquency, illiteracy and other critical problems. Some facts:

ABOUT LEARNING DISABILITIES:

- 15-20% of the U.S. population have some form of learning disability, according to estimates derived from the latest research conducted through the National Institutes of Health on reading disabilities.
- Learning disabilities often run in families.
- Learning disabilities are a lifelong condition, which can be manifested in different ways during the school years and throughout the life span. Individuals with LD, however, can compensate for their difficulties with appropriate intervention, support and accommodations.
- Attention deficits and hyperactivity sometimes co-occur with learning disabilities, but not always.
- Learning disabilities have distinct characteristics and should not be confused with the following: mental retardation, autism, deafness, blindness and behavioral disorders.
- Learning disabilities are not the same in all people. Each individual is unique, and manifestations of learning disabilities vary tremendously.
- Some terms commonly associated with LD include:

Dyslexia – This term is primarily used to describe difficulty with language processing and its impact on reading, writing, and spelling.

Dysgraphia – Involves difficulty with writing; problems might be seen in the actual motor patterns used during writing. Characteristics also include difficulties with spelling and the formulation of written composition.

Auditory Discrimination – This is a key component of efficient language use, and is necessary to "break the code" for reading. It involves being able to perceive the difference between speech sounds and to sequence these sounds into meaningful words.

Visual Perception – This ability is critical to the reading process as it addresses the ability to notice important details and assign meaning to what is seen.

ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF LEARNING DISABILITIES:

- 50-80% of adults with severe literacy problems have undetected or untreated learning disabilities.
- 50% of juvenile delinquents tested were found to have undetected LD. When offered remedial services, their recidivism rates dropped to below 2%.
- More than 50% of students receiving special education services in public schools nationwide are classified as having learning disabilities.
- 65-80% of school-aged children who manifest learning disabilities have basic deficits in language and reading.
- 35% of students identified with learning disabilities drop out of high school.
- A number of studies have shown that a large number (between 17-60%) of adolescents in treatment for substance abuse had learning disabilities.
- Learning disabilities and substance abuse are the most common impediments to keeping welfare recipients from becoming and remaining employed, according to the 1992 report from the Office of the Inspector General.

Cover photo: Claire Yaffa

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES

(NCLD) is one of the foremost national not-for-profit organizations committed to improving the lives of those affected by learning disabilities. Located in New York City, NCLD is under the dedicated leadership of Anne Ford, Chairman of the Board.

PRIMARY PROGRAM AREAS

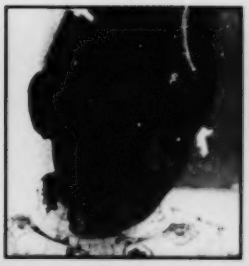
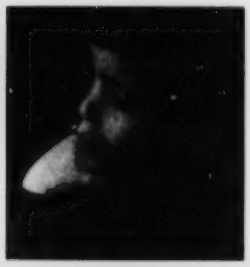
■ NATIONAL INFORMATION & REFERRAL:
NCLD provides a wide range of accurate and up-to-date information about learning disabilities. Through an extensive computerized database, referrals are made to local, state, and national sources of help. These referrals, as well as packets of information about learning disabilities and related topics, are available free of charge. A personalized packet is prepared in response to each individual request. NCLD also offers a variety of printed and multi-media materials for purchase by individuals with learning disabilities, parents, educators, and other helping professionals. These materials, as well as copies of our annual magazine, *Their World*, can be purchased at nominal cost.

■ EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS:
NCLD develops innovative programs, seminars and workshops which assist educators and other professionals who work with individuals with learning disabilities and their families. Current areas of priority include early intervention and teacher preparation. Regional Summits have been held in a number of locations around the United States. These Summits have brought together leading researchers, practitioners, government officials, and individuals with learning disabilities to address issues that will help define the field of education well into the next century. NCLD's programs also provide opportunities for professional networking and for interagency collaboration.

■ PUBLIC OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS:
NCLD conducts ongoing, broad-based public awareness campaigns about learning disabilities and their serious impact on society. Our outreach programs reach the general public as well as targeted audiences including the media, educators, parent groups, health professionals, human service providers, government officials, and other opinion leaders. Through publications such as NCLD's magazine, *Their World*, regular newsletters and updates, and video kits, NCLD reaches millions of Americans each year, promoting and expanding public awareness and education about learning disabilities.

■ LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY & PUBLIC POLICY:
NCLD's active presence in Washington, DC helps to ensure that legislative initiatives protect the rights of individuals with learning disabilities. Working closely with elected and appointed government officials and their staffs, NCLD provides information and support to policy makers so that legislation affecting individuals with learning disabilities will contain language and provisions benefiting them.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CONTENTS

5 Message from Anne Ford, *Chairman of NCLD*

7 About This Issue *by Sheldon H. Horowitz, Ed.D., Executive Editor*

9 Dedication to William Ellis

10 NCLD Program Highlights

RESEARCH ARTICLES

13 NICHD Research Program in Learning Disabilities
by G. Reid Lyon, Ph.D. and Duane Alexander, M.D.

16 Getting Research Into the Classroom
by Donald Deshler, Ph.D. and Jean B. Schumaker, Ph.D.

EDUCATOR RESOURCES

19 Building Bridges: The Parents' Educational Resource Center (PERC) Spans Gaps in Knowledge of LD *by Alexa Cortes Culwell*

22 The Challenge of Inclusionary Education: A Collaborative Model
by Angela M. Wilkins

25 Systematic Language *by Jane Fell Greene, Ed.D.*

EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

27 Teaching Tolerance *by Harriet Arnold*

31 On Teaching Shakespeare to Students with LD *by Terry D. Cowgill*

CREATIVITY

34 Succeeding Through the Arts *by Sally Smith*

40 Art and Music as Stress Busters for LD Children *by Tammy LeNeve*

42 Stages of Learning: The Performing Arts as a Teaching Tool
by David Lightfoot

45 Revealing the Hopes of Adolescents through the Art of Tattoos
by Michael Gerrish

Their World is published by the National Center for Learning Disabilities Inc., 381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420, New York, NY 10016 (212) 545-7510, Fax (212) 545-9665.

©Copyright 1996 by NCLD.

The National Center for Learning Disabilities name and logo are a trademark and a service mark of the National Center for Learning Disabilities Inc.

NCLD thanks all of the children and adults who gave permission to use their photographs, artwork, articles, and poetry for this issue of *Their World*.

Please note: The contents of the articles published in this magazine reflect the views of the authors only, and not necessarily those of the National Center for Learning Disabilities, its officers, or directors. NCLD is most appreciative of the messages of support that make this publication possible, but does not endorse any of the products or companies advertised.

Children and adults whose photographs appear in *Their World* may not be learning disabled, nor are they directly associated with the article in which they appear.

Their World

NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES **1996/1997**

CONTENTS

PROFESSIONAL INSIGHTS

49 Learned Helplessness and Attribution for Success and Failure in LD Students *by Nicki Arnold*

52 A Student's Need for Understanding *by Regina G. Richards*

54 Defining the Self as a Learner for Children with LD *by Augusta H. Gross, Ph.D.*

LD EXPERIENCE: YOUTH

59 My Story *by Matt Rehring*

60 On the Road to College *by Mimi Cooper*

63 Labels *by Ryan Foshay Hanson*

68 Facing Facts *by Kate Eklund*

LD EXPERIENCE: ADULT

70 The Effects of Learning Disability on One's Life *by Anonymous*

73 Reading My Way *by Frances Byfield Pitts*

FOR MY CHILD

76 Explaining LD to a Child *by Belinda Schilling-Leach*

77 Unicorns and Magic Boxes *by Judy and Jessica Levitt*

PARENTS' TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

78 Letter to Our Son *by James and Claire Sollars*

81 A Walk with Denial...A Parents' Friend *by Diane Purchase*

82 Growing Up Successfully *by Jacqueline J. Kingon*

86 The Road Taken *by Nicki Arnold*

89 SPECIAL SECTION FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS
96 FEDERAL LAWS
98 NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST
112 NCLD TIPS

Executive Editor:
Sheldon H. Horowitz, Ed.D.
Managing Editor:
Janet Weinstein
Assistant Editor:
David Fleishman

PHOTOGRAPHS: CLAIRE YAFFA

Photography Sites:
The Children's Evaluation and Rehabilitation Center at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, NY
Eagle Hill School, CT
Eastchester Child Development Center, NY
Windward School, NY

Design: John Stahle
Printing: Van Dyck Press, Ltd., North Haven, CT
Special Supporter:
Continental Grain Company

Reprinting material from *Their World*: NCLD grants permission to photocopy articles for personal use. Please use the following credit citation: *Their World 1996/1997*, National Center for Learning Disabilities, 381 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

An accessible-format version of this publication is available on audio tape through Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic. For more information, call RFB&D Customer Services at 1-800-221-4792.

THANK YOU, CLAIRE YAFFA

NCLD is deeply indebted to Board member Claire Yaffa, whose superb photographs enhance and enliven *Their World* once again this year. Her unique vision and talent as an artist provide a masterful look at the many human aspects of learning disabilities in *Their World* and in many other NCLD publications. As always, Claire's contributions are greatly appreciated.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NCLD

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As of June 30, 1996
NCLD's overall policies and organizational endeavors are guided by a highly active Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of civic and corporate leaders committed to the cause and to NCLD's mission. Board Members are:

ANNE FORD
Chairman of the Board

JOHN G. GANTZ, JR.
Senior Vice Chair
Senior Executive
American International Group, Inc.

ANGELA P. ABELOW
Vice Chair
President
The Seiden Group, Inc.

DARYL WEIL
Vice Chair

WILLIAM HANEY, III, ESQ.
Secretary
Rogers & Wells

ALAN ALTSCHULER
Treasurer

NICKI ARNOLD

GOVERNOR HUGH L. CAREY
Chairman, Board of Advisors
Cambridge Partners, LLC

SENATOR CHRISTOPHER J. DODD
United States Senate

ANN C. FISHER

ALEXANDER H. GARDNER, ESQ.
Asst. District Attorney, Queens

ARLYN S. GARDNER

MARK J. GRIFFIN, Ph.D.
Headmaster
Eagle Hill School

DEBORAH S. HARRIS

CAROL JENKINS
Co-Anchor
Fox Channel Five

MARY J. KALIKOW

CARL L. KEMPNER
Senior Partner
Hamershlag, Kempner & Co., L.P.

PAUL LECLERC, Ph.D.
President & CEO
The New York Public Library

JAMES G. NIVEN
Managing Director
Burson-Marsteller

VICTOR ORISTANO
Chairman
Oristano Foundation

DR. BETTY OSMAN
Psychologist
Child & Adolescent Service
Department of Psychiatry
White Plains Hospital Medical Center

CHARLES D. PEEBLER, JR.
Chief Executive Officer
Bozell Worldwide Inc.

BARBARA PERLMUTTER
Vice President of Public Affairs
Marsh & McLennan Companies, Inc.

SHEILA B. PLANK
President
S.B. Plank Associates

OLIVER SOCKWELL
President and CEO
College Construction Loan
Insurance Association

SHELLEY MOSLEY STANZEL
Chief Executive Officer
ArchiPed Classics

RICHARD C. STRAUSS
Chairman & CEO
RCS Investments

MELINDA F. VANDEN HEUVEL

CLAIRE K. YAFFA

PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

As of June 30, 1996
NCLD's Professional Advisory Board (PAB) members—all recognized experts in the field of learning disabilities—include leading physicians, psychologists, educators, researchers and advocates. The PAB evaluates needs and provides guidance in determining the organization's programmatic directions. Members are:

MARK J. GRIFFIN, Ph.D.
Chair
Headmaster
Eagle Hill School

EDGAR J. KENTON, III, M.D.
Vice Chair
Chief, Division of Neurology
Lankenau Hospital

CARMEN ALVAREZ, M.S.
Vice President of Special Education
United Federation of Teachers

BENITA A. BLACHMAN, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Graduate Program in Learning Disabilities
Syracuse University

ROBERT BROOKS, Ph.D.
Director, Department of Psychology
McLean Hospital

DOUGLAS W. CARNINE, Ph.D.
Director
National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators
University of Oregon
College of Education

BERNARD L. CHARLES, M.S.

ELIZABETH DANE, Ph.D.
Hunter College
School of Social Work

DONALD D. DESHLER, Ph.D.
Professor of Special Education
Director of the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning
Robert Dole Human Development Center

DRAKE D. DUANE, M.D.
Director, Institute for Developmental Behavioral Neurology
Arizona State University

G. EMERSON DICKMAN, ESQ.

PAUL J. GERBER, Ph.D.
Professor of Special Education
Virginia Commonwealth University
School of Education

JUDY HOWARD, M.D.
Professor of Clinical Pediatrics
UCLA Medical Center

STEVAN KUKIC, Ph.D.
Director of At-Risk and Special Education Services
Utah State Dept. of Education

JUDGE THOMAS P. McGEE
Chief Judge
Jefferson Parish Juvenile Court

ALBA A. ORTIZ, Ph.D.
Office of the Dean
College of Education
The University of Texas at Austin

BETTY OSMAN, Ph.D.
Psychologist,
Child & Adolescent Service
Department of Psychiatry
White Plains Hospital Medical Center

CONGRESSMAN MAJOR OWENS
United States House of Representatives

JEAN PETERSEN
Executive Director
Learning Disabilities Association of America

WALDEMAR ROJAS, M.A.
Superintendent of Schools
San Francisco Unified School District

ARLYN ROFFMAN, Ph.D.
Professor of Special Education
Lesley College

BENNETT A. SHAYWITZ, M.D.
Professor of Pediatrics,
Neurology and Child Study Center
Yale University School of Medicine

SALLY E. SHAYWITZ, M.D.
Professor of Pediatrics
Yale Center for Learning and Attention
Yale University School of Medicine

JOHN B. SIKORSKI, M.D.
Associate Clinical Professor
University of California - San Francisco Medical Center

SALLY SMITH, M.S.
Founder/Director
The Lab School of Washington

PAT WALTER, M.S.
Teacher
Central Park East Secondary School

CLAIRE WURTZEL, M.S.
Chair, Special Education
Bank Street College

HONORARY BOARD

CARRIE ROZELLE
Founder

MARTIN S. DAVIS
CEO & Managing Partner
Wellspring Associates

J. IRA HARRIS
General Partner
Lazard Freres & Company

MRS. BENJAMIN L. HOOKS

MRS. CHARLES HURWITZ

F. ROSS JOHNSON
Chairman and
Chief Executive Officer
RJM Group

DIANE McDONALD
McDonald Communications Inc.

JOHN A. MEYERS
President
Foundation for the United States Constitution

EDWIN NADEL, CLU
The Nadel-Stein Agency
The New England

MRS. DAN RATHER

PATRICIA ROONEY

MICHAEL ROTH, ESQ.
Rosenman & Colin

MRS. HERBERT J. SIEGEL

FRED R. SULLIVAN
Chairman of the Board
Richton International Corp.

THOMAS SULLIVAN
Internal Auditor
National Football League

FRED WILPON
Chairman of the Board
Sterling Equities

NCLD STAFF

BONNIE L. KESSLER
Executive Director

ROSE C. CRAWFORD
Associate Executive Director

SHELDON H. HOROWITZ, Ed.D.
Director, Professional Services

CHRISTINE LORD
Director, Government Relations and Public Affairs

JANET WEINSTEIN
Director, Marketing and Communications

DAVID FLEISHMAN
Assistant Director, Professional Services

BERNADETTE COLAS
Office Manager

MARCIA GRIFFITH
Information & Referral Manager

JOHN THOMPSON
Coordinator, Special Projects

KAREN BERNHARD
Information & Referral Associate

NORAH MASON
Information & Referral Associate

BETH GOODRICH
Administrative Assistant

STUART MICHAEL
Accountant

WENDY McCARTHY
Communications Assistant

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MESSAGE FROM ANNE FORD

Chairman of the Board
National Center for Learning Disabilities

We certainly know more today about learning disabilities (LD) than ever before. New and exciting research has enabled us to explore new ways to identify and provide services to individuals with LD. But, is the growth in knowledge about learning disabilities benefiting our children?

Great gaps still remain between research and practice. Despite recent breakthroughs in research and teaching technology, too few people have had access to these important findings, which could help all students when translated into classroom practice. Much of the most promising scientific research on LD has been through the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, a branch of the National Institutes of Health.

The challenge is to spread the word to parents, educators, and to other professionals who help individuals with LD and their families. That is one of the most important tasks NCLD has taken on in the production of *Their World* and in developing our other diverse program and public awareness activities.

Of particular note is the National Summit on Teacher Preparation, which was hosted by NCLD in May, 1996 in collaboration with four other leading national organizations committed to helping individuals with learning disabilities. This event brought together leaders in general and special education to consider the nature of the teaching force that will be required in the next century. It marked the first time that the major organizations in the LD field have collaborated on this level to reach out to general educators. More than 35 national education organizations joined in the Summit as co-sponsors, to consider how best to prepare teachers to be the best they can be to benefit all students, including the 15-20 percent of our school-aged children with learning disabilities.

A turning point in recognition of the magnitude and seriousness of learning disabilities proved to be the recent presentation by Drs. Sally and Bennett Shaywitz at the World Economic Forum. For the first time in its 26-year history, this important international event featured learning disabilities. Drs. Shaywitz, renowned researchers in learning disabilities at Yale University and members of NCLD's Professional Advisory Board, presented an in-depth overview of the field and the latest research findings to the 2,000 business and scientific leaders and heads of state at this historic forum. Their session generated a great deal of discussion and concern from the world leaders attending, many of whom revealed their own and their families' learning problems.

If more people took a stand and revealed their own personal experiences with LD, it would help gain acceptance and understanding. As difficult as it was, I did and it has made the difference in my daughter's life.

This underscored that

LD is a really important, widespread problem and that a crying need for information exists. As Dr. Sally Shaywitz noted, "All of these accomplished people have hidden their learning disabilities due to either misunderstanding or embarrassment. The research increasingly confirms that you can be intelligent and have a learning disability."

Prominent leaders in business and industry have increasingly disclosed their learning disabilities. Recent features in both *Fortune* and *Forbes* magazines highlighted that a number of corporate chief executives have struggled with dyslexia and other learning problems. If more people took a stand and revealed their own personal experiences with LD, it would help gain acceptance and understanding that it is a problem affecting all of us.

THE LINK BETWEEN LITERACY AND LEARNING DISABILITIES

Another issue that warrants increased public attention is the close connection between LD and literacy problems. Studies indicate that 50 - 80 percent of adults with severe literacy problems have undetected or untreated learning disabilities. Literacy has gained wide acceptance as a critical issue to the nation's future. Educational forums on literacy have gained increasing involvement from the public and corporate sectors. Literacy problems often are symptoms of underlying learning disabilities and by treating LD we can tackle illiteracy. We need to highlight the connection between LD and illiteracy so they may be dealt with together and more effectively. We need to continue our work with literacy groups to strengthen our combined outreach and help improve the outcomes for the millions of people affected by these difficulties.

THE MEDIA AND THE LD MESSAGE

We also need to utilize the increased media interest in learning disabilities to our advantage. Learning disabilities are getting heightened attention in the media, though some of it unfortunately is negative and conveys damaging misinformation. This has been particularly true in terms of identification of LD and securing necessary accommodations and services in schools, especially in higher education. It is unfortunate that NEGATIVES often sell. Parents should not feel discouraged by this. We can all work—together—to turn this around.

We can capitalize on the increased attention afforded to LD and reach out to educators, to the media, to government leaders with the facts. NCLD and the other organizations committed to helping individuals with learning disabilities are working collaboratively to achieve our objectives. On an individual level, we can all communicate with elected officials and local newspapers about these issues and our personal experiences and struggles.

If more people were aware of the facts—the research, the knowledge about the prevalence and seriousness of LD, and our personal experiences—understanding would grow. Ultimately, more children and adults with learning disabilities would receive help and would be better able to become productive members of society and lead fulfilling lives.

That is what NCLD works toward every day and *Their World* strives to capture in print. We thank every one of you who helps to make a positive difference for the millions of children and adults with learning disabilities. If parents or any of you need advice or help, please be sure to call NCLD. ■

THANK YOU, ROSE CRAWFORD

NCLD salutes and thanks Rose Crawford, as she leaves her position as Associate Executive Director, for her exemplary work on behalf of individuals with learning disabilities. Over the past seven years, Rose has dedicated her energy and her extraordinary talents to advancing the mission and scope of our organization. First as Director of Program Management, as Acting Executive Director and, in her most recent position, Rose gained the admiration and respect of not only the NCLD Board of Directors, the Professional Advisory Board, and the staff, but also everyone with whom she worked. She demonstrated an astute understanding of the issue of learning disabilities, and the ability to learn and motivate others and manage the organization's internal functions. The success of the National Summit on Teacher Preparation, for which Rose served as Coordinator, was a testament to her commitment.

We wish Rose and her growing family the best and welcome her to the ranks of NCLD's volunteers. ■

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

BY SHELDON H. HOROWITZ, Ed.D.
Executive Editor of Their World
National Center for Learning Disabilities

The field of learning disabilities has entered a most exciting time. During the past few decades, we have seen teachers and behavioral scientists swimming against a tide of misconception and prejudice. We have fought to untangle ourselves from a web of definitions that were based on assumptions and best-guesses, and we have worried (and rightfully so) about constructing models for learning disability that were often based on studies of adults who sustained neurological trauma during military conflict. While the road ahead is still one fraught with potential obstacles, we are increasingly able to say that all children, adolescents, and adults can learn, can be productive members of society and can be helped to actualize their dreams.

We are at an important crossroad, one that will define both general and special educational efforts into the next century. With the age of technology upon us and with the benefit such incredible tools as CT scans, PET scans, fMRI, longitudinal genetic data, and carefully designed and replicated research-based instructional protocols, we are well positioned to insure that our best efforts result in best practice. Our challenges are many. We must insure that our research is relevant to educational practice, and that what we know to be best practice is implemented in our nation's classrooms. We must be sure that all teachers, students, researchers, and other support providers work collaboratively and pool resources and information toward our common goals. We must be sure that parents and families are integrally involved in all aspects of programming and support, and we must increase public awareness of learning disabilities and work toward accurate and fair coverage by the media.

After having spent years in educational and clinical settings, I truly welcome the opportunity to share in NCLD's mission to work in close collaboration with government and other service organizations, and to disseminate information that will make a difference in how teachers teach and how children are afforded opportunities to learn. My heartfelt thanks to the entire NCLD staff for their hard work on this edition of *Their World* and for welcoming me as an advisor, colleague, and friend. My special thanks to Anne, Bonnie, and the members of the Board of Directors and Professional Advisory Board for their confidence and ongoing support.

Most of all, my thanks to all of our contributing authors and sponsors. *Their World* is their magazine, and we are all enriched by so generous an outpouring of thoughts and life experiences. You will note that our publication date has been changed to coincide with the academic calendar. Special efforts have been made to update and expand this year's Resource and TIPS sections, and we hope to be adding a number of new features, including a listing of Promising Practices, in next year's edition. Your comments and suggestions are welcome, and I am sure that you will share my enthusiasm about this very special 1996-1997 edition of *Their World*. ■

DEDICATION TO WILLIAM ELLIS

A Visionary in the Field of Learning Disabilities

This issue of Their World *is dedicated to the memory of Bill Ellis, who served as Executive Editor.*

Bill Ellis came to the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) in 1991 and it was his vision that framed what NCLD has become. His rare combination of expertise and stature in the learning disabilities (LD) field, and his compassion as a humanitarian, led us to broaden our scope and reach out to collaborate not only with other learning disabilities organizations, but also to establish our place on the national scene. NCLD's accomplishments over the last few years are Bill's accomplishments. He has left us with an incomparable legacy.

One of the most important assets of NCLD is the annual publication of *Their World*. Always a respected magazine, Bill's role as Executive Editor fueled the evolution of this product into a highly practical and information-filled tool, valued by parents and professionals. He was instrumental in improving many aspects of *Their World*, from the Resource Section to the many articles and research updates. Today it is truly considered by all to be unique in its scope and relevance to a wide range of audiences.

Bill's insights into the importance of early intervention for children with LD led to the *Every Child Is Learning* project. This program, which has recently come to fruition, holds tremendous promise for parents and professionals who work with preschool populations, providing critical information about child development and alerting them about possible signs that place children at risk for later learning problems.

NCLD's highly effective and respected National Summits also are the fruit of Bill's dreams. Our National Summit in Washington, DC in 1994 brought LD to the highest levels of government. Through his determination, an interagency task force on LD was formed, the effects of which are still being felt today.

Our National Summit on Teacher Preparation in May, 1996 was his last great and ambitious undertaking. Although, sadly, he was not with us, it was his idea and dream to establish a forum where general and special education forces could join together and begin to shape the teaching force for tomorrow. This two-day event was, in fact, a tribute to Bill's lifelong dedication as an educator and visionary in the field of learning disabilities. Bill always saw beyond the world of LD and recognized early on the need to reach all educators. This Summit did just that.

Bill Ellis was beloved by the staff and volunteers at NCLD. He will be missed by the world, but especially by the people he dealt with on a day-to-day basis. We will all have Bill in our hearts and thoughts for a long time to come.

ANNE FORD
Chairman of the Board, NCLD

THE BILL ELLIS TEACHER PREPARATION AWARD

NCLD is pleased to announce the introduction of the **Bill Ellis Teacher Preparation Award,** established to honor the memory of this great educator and humanitarian. This award recognizes both Bill's work at NCLD, the Orton Dyslexia Society and other organizations, and his commitment to strengthening the resources available to teachers who touch the lives of children with learning disabilities. For more information, contact NCLD.

NCLD PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

This past year, the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) experienced heightened program activity and renewed momentum. Among the highlights:

THE NATIONAL SUMMIT ON TEACHER PREPARATION

As a follow up to the landmark 1994 Washington DC Summit, *Learning Disabilities: A National Responsibility,* NCLD convened a Summit at the New York Public Library titled *Teaching: The Nation's Lifeline.* Collaborating with the Council for Learning Disabilities, the Division for Learning Disabilities of the Council for Exceptional Children, the Learning Disabilities Association of America, and the Orton Dyslexia Society, this Summit brought together leaders in general and special education to explore needed changes in teacher preparation practices across America.

Serving as Co-Chairmen of this event were NCLD's Chair, Anne Ford, Dr. Paul LeClerc, President and Chief Executive Officer of The New York Public Library, and Dr. Thomas Hehir, Director of the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). More than 35 national education organizations and 43 national leaders comprised the speaking roster. Their deliberations and the ensuing Summit report will serve as catalysts to enable state legislatures, public and private teacher training institutions, teacher's unions, and other educational agencies, to effect positive change in teacher preparation.

EVERY CHILD IS LEARNING

NCLD is proud to launch this unique program for parents, teachers and other early care providers. Using videotape and printed materials, the *Every Child is Learning* program focuses on the preschool population and is designed to help aid in the recognition of early warning signs that place three-to-five year old children at risk for later language and learning disabilities. The National Head Start Bureau has been a partner in the development of this program since its inception, and it is currently targeting this program for use at early care sites across the country.

NATIONAL INFORMATION & REFERRAL SERVICE EXPANSION

NCLD's National Information and Referral Service has been expanded to include over 25 information packets covering such topics as self-esteem, socialization, the gifted student, recent research findings, technology and computer software, and the evaluation process. Our resource database now contains more than 3,000 national, regional, and local resources.

PUBLICATIONS REVAMPING

Based on increasing demands for information, NCLD's publications were redesigned and expanded. Our newsletter, *NCLD News,* now being published quarterly, includes more material than ever before and has been re-formatted to enhance readability. NCLD has also introduced *News Alerts,* a series of topical news briefs that cover important trends and developments, particularly in the legislative arena. *Their World* has

been revamped as well, with the expansion of the TIPS section and an updating and revision of the Resource Section. Of special note was a mailing to 26,000 members of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which resulted in 3,000 requests for copies of *Their World* and other specific information on learning disabilities and related issues.

MEDIA

NCLD continues to approach the mass media and serve as a resource to disseminate accurate information and heighten awareness about learning disabilities. During the past year, NCLD has been involved in coverage by numerous media across the nation including: *The New York Times*, *Arizona Republic*, *Dallas Child*, *Healthy Kids*, *McCall's*, *Woman's Day*, *Working Mother*, Fox TV News, Associated Press (reaching 1,500+ newspapers and 1,000+ radio stations),and the *Los Angeles Times* Syndicate (100+ newspapers). NCLD also participated in the revision of *Scouting for the Learning Disabled*, a manual for the Boy Scouts of America.

COORDINATED CAMPAIGN FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES

NCLD has joined with other learning disabilities organizations and communications and media professionals in the development of a national campaign to increase awareness of LD. In its initial phase, the Campaign is funded by the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation and is being administered and coordinated through the Communications Consortium Media Center (CCMC), a non-profit organization based in Washington, DC. The campaign was initiated following a national public opinion poll, supported by the Tremaine Foundation, which confirmed a lack of accurate information about learning disabilities within the general population.

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY/PUBLIC POLICY

Through an ongoing presence in Washington, DC, NCLD has been successful in its efforts to advance education on and awareness of the need for more effective policies and legislation for individuals with learning disabilities. Conducting meetings and monitoring trends, NCLD's working relationships with elected and appointed government officials has actually had an impact on drafting language for pending legislation. The NCLD Professional Advisory Board has affirmed priorities for public policy activity as: reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), education reform, collaborative relationships and coalition building, medicaid reimbursement, and parental involvement. Over the past year, NCLD has worked on 13 significant pieces of legislation, and has developed relationships with more than 30 other national organizations concerned with LD issues. ■

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES

NCLD invites you (students, parents, teachers, helping professionals, adults with learning disabilities) to submit articles for future editions of *Their World*. Submissions may focus on any aspect of learning disabilities. Please note that articles:

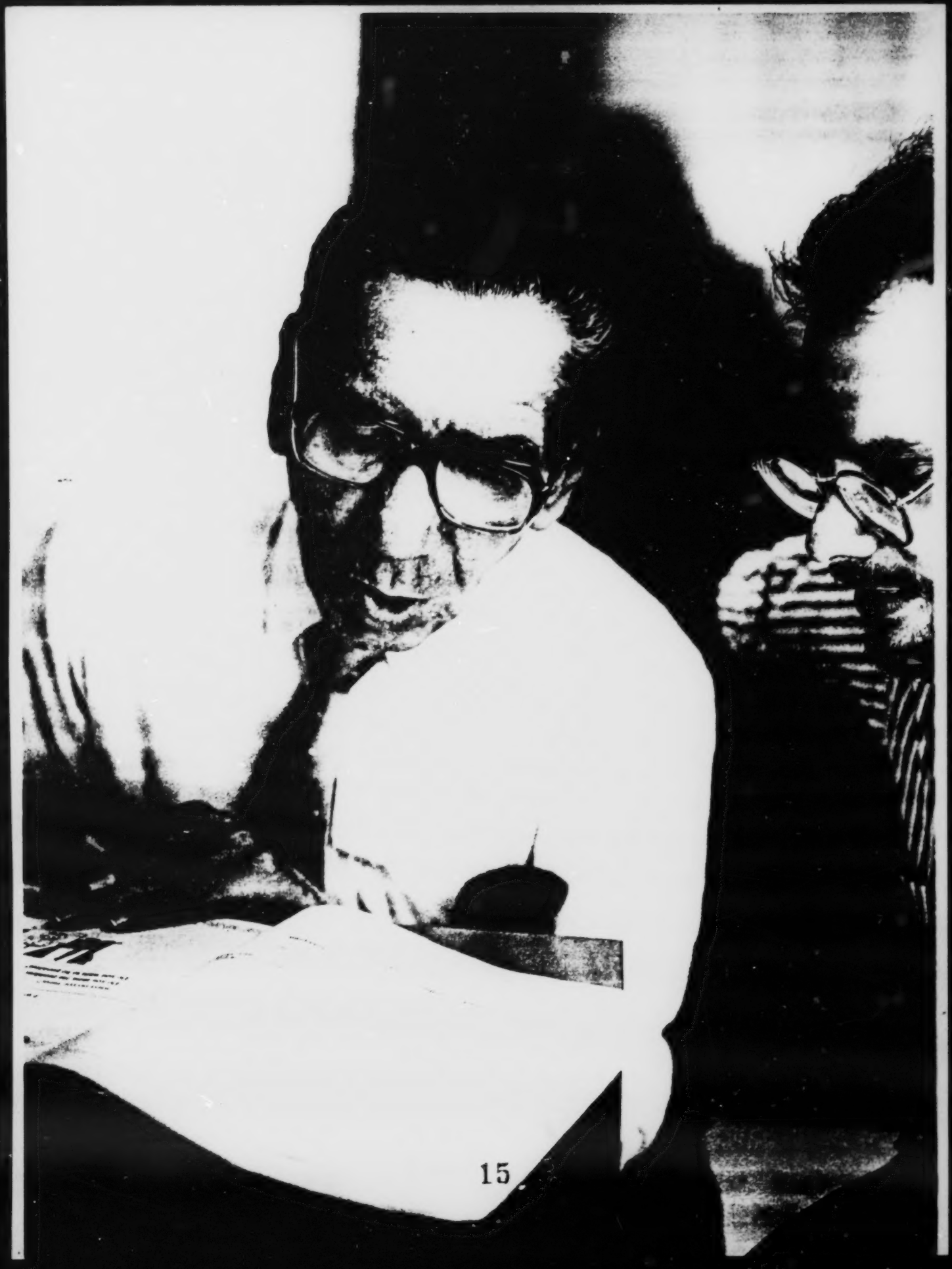
- should not exceed 1500 words (or 6 double-spaced typed pages);
- should include a title and sub-headings;
- should be submitted on 3 1/2" floppy disk along with one hard (print) copy.

Materials for the 1997-98 edition must be received no later than April 1, 1997.

Other important information for authors:

- Do not submit materials that have been submitted for publication elsewhere.
- Copyrighted material will not be accepted.
- Be sure to include a brief biographical note about the author with each submission.

Please contact NCLD (212-545-7510) for additional information or to obtain a Publications Release Form. All materials should be sent to: Executive Editor, *Their World*, NCLD 381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420, New York, New York 10016-8806. ■



NICHD RESEARCH PROGRAM IN LEARNING DISABILITIES

BY G. REID LYON, Ph.D. *and*
DUANE ALEXANDER, M.D.

RESEARCH ARTICLES

In 1985, the Health Research Extension Act was passed by Congress and signed into law by the President (Public Law 99-158). This Act mandated the establishment of a Federal Interagency Committee on Learning Disabilities which was charged with the task of making specific recommendations to increase the effectiveness of research in learning disabilities. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) was selected to lead this effort. The Interagency Committee thus recommended that new research be conducted that was long-term, prospective, longitudinal, and multidisciplinary in nature.

In response to this challenge, the NICHD initiated the development of a collaborative research network that now is composed of five learning disability research centers (LDRCs), four multidisciplinary research programs for the study of dyslexia, and three large research programs devoted to the study of treatment and intervention approaches for language-based reading disabilities. The LDRCs are located at the University of Colorado, Yale University, Johns Hopkins University, Harvard University, and the University of Washington-Seattle. The Dyslexia Research Programs are located at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston, Bowman- Gray School of Medicine in Winston-Salem, Yale University, and the University of Colorado. The three dyslexia treatment research programs are located at Florida State University, the University of Houston, and Georgia State University.

HOW THE PRESENT RESEARCH DIFFERS FROM RESEARCH IN THE PAST

Until 1985, the study of learning disabilities (LD) had not been effectively coordinated. Studies were typically conducted on biased samples, obviously leading to biased results. Specifically, the majority of studies conducted during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s were carried out with children (and adults) who had been identified as LD according to widely varying definitions and criteria. For example, studies involving individuals with LD in Iowa would obtain different findings from studies undertaken in Florida, primarily because the samples selected for study were different. The state or local criteria for the identification of LD differed and thus the samples differed. No doubt this haphazard research strategy led to predictable difficulties in replicating and generalizing research findings.

In addition, the majority of studies of LD over the past 20 years have attempted to understand the disorder by studying individuals who were grouped according to the vague and ambiguous label "Learning Disabled." This was unfortunate. The LD category is actually composed of seven different types of disabilities, each of which is significantly different from the others. As a number of scientists have recently pointed out, it simply makes little sense to conduct investigations of some broadly defined entity called "learning disability" given what we already know about the differences between the various types of learning disabilities. Thus, the NICHD LD Research Program defines groups specifically in terms of their specific deficit (i.e., reading disability, mathematics disability, etc.) prior to study. By insuring that the research is focused on specific types of LD, rather than the general category, and by conducting investigations in a prospective longitudinal fashion, the NICHD has begun to obtain highly replicable results that have clinical significance.

The longitudinal nature of the NICHD research is of critical importance. In the main, studies are initiated with children before they enter school and the children are then followed and studied as they proceed through school. This research strategy serves as a platform to (1) identify critical learning and behavioral characteristics that may be manifested different ways at different developmental periods, (2) develop early predictors of academic difficulties, (3) map the developmental course of specific types of LD, (4) identify commonly co-occurring disorders and secondary behavioral consequences that develop in response to failure in school, and (5) assess the efficacy of different treatments and teaching methods for the different types of LD.

WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED?

During the past 10 years, NICHD research has concentrated on reading disabilities as a specific type of LD. This is because reading disabilities are the most common type of LD and clearly the most damaging in terms of an individual's school learning, school adjustment, and occupational and vocational success. By focusing on reading disabilities, NICHD researchers have now been able to replicate several findings related to the etiology (causes), developmental course, cognitive features, and biological characteristics of reading disabilities, as well as to the effectiveness of different treatment/ intervention approaches. These findings are summarized below:

- Definitional issues continue to be the single greatest impediment to understanding learning disabilities and to helping children and adults with LD.
- The use of the general term "learning disabilities" in research practice may hinder our ultimate understanding of the causes, developmental courses, and outcomes of the specific types of disabilities subsumed within the LD category. The research community must grapple with the need to address each type of LD in its own right in order to arrive at clear definitional statements and a coherent understanding of etiology, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment. This particular finding does not, in any way, detract from the clear need to continue to use the term learning disabilities in forging public policy and advocating for the millions of individuals whose lives are affected by LD.
- Language-based reading disabilities are the most prevalent type of LD and affect approximately 17% of school-age children to some degree. This type of reading difficulty is typically reflected in inaccurate and slow decoding and word recognition. This laborious reading of single words frequently impedes the individual's ability to comprehend what has been read, even though listening comprehension is adequate.
- While other factors will no doubt be identified as contributing to reading disability, deficits in phonological processing appear to reflect the major impediment to learning to read. Deficits in phonological processing are characterized by difficulties in segmenting syllables and words into constituent sound units called phonemes—in short, there is a difficulty in turning spelling into sounds.
- Deficits in phonological processing can be identified in late kindergarten and first grade, and the presence of these deficits is a strong indicator that difficulties in learning to read will follow.
- Deficits in phonological processing appear to be heritable, as shown in both behavioral and molecular genetic studies. Likewise, language-based reading disabilities are highly related to significant dif-

ferences in neural processing.

■ Although we now have the ability to identify children who are at-risk for reading failure, and we now understand some of the instructional conditions that must be considered for teaching, the majority of LD readers are not identified until the third grade. This is apparently too late. Seventy-five percent of children identified after nine years-of-age continue to demonstrate reading difficulties throughout high school.

■ Despite the widely-held belief that boys are more likely to have reading disabilities than girls, research has shown that as many girls as boys have difficulties learning to read. More boys are identified by teachers in school because of their tendency to be more rowdy and active than girls.

■ The most powerful interventions that have been identified for reading disabilities to date consist of a combination of explicit instruction in phonemic awareness, explicit instruction in sound-symbol relationships (phonics), and direct and integrated instruction in text reading and comprehension. This balanced approach appears to be necessary for adults as well as children with reading disabilities.

Deficits in phonological processing appear to reflect the major impediments to learning to read

■ Unfortunately, teachers remain seriously unprepared to address individual differences in many academic skills, but particularly reading. However, teachers cannot be expected to know what they have not been taught. More specifically, current university-based teacher preparation programs have been found to be inadequate for the preparation of teachers to address reading disabilities and other types of LD.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

During the next five years, the NICHD will continue to conduct prospective longitudinal studies of language and reading disabilities and will expand these programs to include investigations of disabilities in written language, mathematics, and social behavior. In addition, the NICHD research will focus on the study of disorders of attention and the relationship of such disorders to difficulties learning to read, write, and to develop competencies in arithmetic calculation and mathematics reasoning.

The NICHD will also continue to design, conduct, and support neuroimaging and other neurophysiological studies that provide a window on the relationship between the developing brain and the ability to learn. We need to better understand how the brain is organized for complex behaviors, and to know more specifically how the child with learning disabilities and the child without such disabilities differ with respect to central nervous system functioning. Within this context, it is important for us to know how neurophysiological and neuroanatomical differences are related to genetic factors and to environmental influences.

Very importantly, we will be expanding our basic and applied research programs to understand how different treatment and teaching interventions affect well-defined learning deficits in children with learning disabilities. It is critical that we identify the teaching conditions that must be in place in order to help youngsters develop competencies in academic and social skills. We must develop a better understanding about which preventative strategies and/or treatment interventions are most effective for particular types of learners at different stages of development, in different content areas, and in different settings. It is our view that our future ability to prepare professionals to teach children with learning disabilities would necessarily depend on a clear understanding of these conditions. ■

For more information on the NICHD Research Program, contact: Dr. G. Reid Lyon, NICHD/NIH, 6100 Building, Room 4B05, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20892.

Editor's Note: Dr. Alexander is Director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), National Institutes of Health. Dr. Lyon is Director of Research Programs in Learning Disabilities, Language Disorders, and Disorders of Attention, NICHD.

GETTING RESEARCH INTO THE CLASSROOM

BY DONALD DESHLER, Ph.D.
and JEAN B. SCHUMAKER, Ph.D.

Addressing the needs of students with disabilities is a great challenge. This challenge is exacerbated when teachers are faced with an absence of validated instructional materials and/or procedures to use in their work with exceptional populations. Following the passage of P.L.94-142 over 20 years ago, a broad array of Federally supported research and demonstration efforts were undertaken to address this issue. Despite this support for research and development activities, many have argued that the knowledge generated from these efforts has only sporadically found its way into the classroom. Indeed, even though millions of dollars have been spent and numerous innovative practices have been validated, thousands of youths with learning disabilities continue to fail and to drop out of school.

A startling finding by Dr. Doug Carnine and his colleagues at the National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators is that less that 10% of the materials and methods currently being used in schools today have been validated. Furthermore, they have underscored the potentially negative ramifications of the gap between educational practice and research by drawing an analogy between the practice of using medicines that have not undergone rigorous research and testing with the practice of using invalidated educational procedures with students. While untested medicines are not tolerated in health care, the use of invalidated instructional procedures and materials seem to be commonly accepted in education.

WHY GOOD PRACTICES AREN'T USED

Why are validated innovative practices not being used? The literature on educational change, largely in regular education, is filled with documentation on the difficulty of transforming research into routinized practice. Regardless of the content or nature of innovations, the following set of findings has emerged in this literature as characterizing failed efforts at educational change: (a) researchers often fail to understand the teaching process from the vantage point of the teacher; thus they do not develop interventions in light of the realities faced by teachers; (b) innovations are not readily embraced by teachers because they have not met the "palatability" or usability criterion that is so important for teachers; (c) during the development stage, researchers frequently fail to get any input from teachers; thus, teachers lack a sense of "vested interest" in the innovation; and (d) the amount of resistance to change seems related to the amount of energy and time required to learn new skills or roles associ-

ated with the innovation.

Considerable attention is now being focused on exploring strategies for more effectively bridging the gap between research and practice. Increasingly, educators who study the change process (for example, Ellen Schiller and David Malous from the U.S. Department of Education) are suggesting that a major reason for a lack of implementation of research findings in practice is the reliance on an "objectivist" perspective or a "linear" model. Each of these paradigms adheres to the basic view that interventions should be validated by researchers, then translated, packaged, and disseminated to practitioners, who should then replicate them in the classroom. Unfortunately, when practitioners have little voice in the process and when few, if any, of the contextual realities that practitioners confront daily are accounted for, there is often little motivation to implement an innovation.

While untested medicines are not tolerated in health care, the use of invalidated instructional procedures and materials seem to be commonly accepted in education

TOWARD A SOLUTION

An alternative perspective is one that does not assume a hierarchical, unidirectional relationship between researchers and practitioners. Rather, it sees valuable knowledge as being contributed by both researchers and practitioners in the process of developing new innovations for students with disabilities. In essence, this approach calls for a sustained interaction between researchers and practitioners in which research knowledge and practice knowledge merge and where the logic of replication is replaced by the logic of leverage and synergy between the parties involved. This perspective tends to be more "developmental" than "single solution" in orientation.

Clearly, new models must be developed for effectively integrating the best knowledge available from the research community with the best knowledge available from the teaching community, in order to markedly improve the quality of services offered to individuals with disabilities. Teachers possess a wealth of information about children, learning, classroom dynamics, and the complexities that surround the process of schooling. Educational researchers have a great deal of knowledge about how to study and measure the complex events that comprise the schooling experience. Each knowledge set is vital to improving educational practice and student outcomes. Unfortunately, teachers and researchers seldom work together in sustained and meaningful ways. Rather, they generally seem to lack an awareness of each others' perspectives on children, learning disabilities, and schooling, and they seldom capitalize on each others' expertise.

ONE OPTION FOR BRIDGING THE GAP

Since its inception in 1977, the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning (KU-CRL) (formerly the Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities) has been committed to designing and disseminating validated interventions into classroom settings. The KU-CRL six-stage process optimizes the degree to which validated innovations can find their way into the classroom. This process illustrates one way that a group of researchers have attempted to engage in a participatory process with practitioners for the purpose of bridging the gap between research and practice. While this system is far from perfect, it has been successful in markedly increasing the speed and degree to which educational innovations find their way into the classroom.

This process underscores the fact that the KU-CRL philosophy embodies a strong commitment to translating validated interventions to instructional packages and procedures that can be used in a broad array of classroom settings. While this process is a very dynamic and interactive one with a great deal of overlap between the stages, each stage will be described in isolation.

Stage 1, the **"High-Impact Idea" Stage**, is that phase of the research process in which a host of possible research areas and questions are

explored. During this period, in addition to reviewing existing research data, many formal (e.g., focus groups) and informal conversations are held with representatives from key stakeholder groups, especially practitioners, for the purpose of specifying a set of potentially "high-impact" research ideas that should be pursued. In other words, the research that is conducted by the KU-CRL staff is the product of multiple perspectives and a broad array of input.

During Stage 2, the **Research Stage**, formal research studies are conducted related to the ideas identified during the first stage. During each key juncture of this stage (e.g., determining the nature of the intervention or the evaluation measures used, etc.) input from practitioners is solicited. Research is conducted in schools with teachers implementing the interventions under standard classroom conditions and providing feedback about them through formal and informal means. Feedback from students is also solicited.

In Stage 3, the **Data Dissemination Stage**, the data from the research studies are shared with other researchers. Traditional channels of dissemination such as research journals, professional conferences, book chapters, etc. are used. The purpose of this stage is to submit the work of the KU-CRL to the professional community for formal review and critique.

During Stage 4, the **Product Development Stage**, field-test versions of documents describing validated intervention procedures are translated into "user-friendly" manuals for practitioners. Input from representatives of the target consumer group is solicited throughout this entire process. A product may undergo as many as eight revisions before it is deemed acceptable by members of the consumer group.

Stage 5, the **Certifying Trainers Stage**, embodies several activities related to the preparation of professionals who can work on-site with practitioners to train them in the use of KU-CRL validated materials and procedures. An extensive selection process is used to identify potential trainers. Foremost among the criteria is that before a person can become a trainer, he/she must have extensive experience in implementing instruction associated with a host of KU-CRL materials and procedures. The certification process generally takes approximately 2-3 years and includes several hands-on experiences in tailoring interventions to the unique contextual factors teachers will present to the ensuing training sessions. When a trainer is certified, he/she becomes a member of the KU-CRL's International Training Network (ITN).

Stage 6, the **Support the Network Stage**, consists of a multifaceted set of experiences and resources for ITN members and the teachers they are training for the purposes of becoming updated on and influencing the research of the KU-CRL researcher, ITN members, and classroom teachers. For example, monthly newsletters, a bimonthly "teacher idea" publication, an electronic network (StrateNET), and annual regional and national conferences all help to facilitate communications and strengthen the network.

SUMMARY

One of the greatest challenges facing the educational community is finding ways to bridge the gap between research and practice. The needs of students with learning disabilities are so great that students cannot afford to endure educational practices that are not based on solid empirical evidence. It is imperative that researchers acknowledge their responsibility in translating their findings into a form that educators find useful and helpful. On the other hand, it is incumbent upon teachers to seek out and use only those instructional practices that have undergone rigorous evaluation and testing. An important preliminary step to bridge the gulf that often exists between research activities and classroom practice is for researchers and educators to begin to view each other as partners and to open the lines of communication and sharing. Not only would each group learn a great deal, but the children, who both groups want to help, will be the major beneficiaries! ■

Editor's Note: Donald D. Deshler, Ph.D. is the Director of the Center for Research on Learning Disabilities at the University of Kansas and a member of NCLD's Professional Advisory Board. Jean Schumaker, Ph.D., is Associate Director of the Center for Research on Learning Disabilities at the University of Kansas.

BUILDING BRIDGES

The Parents' Educational Resource Center (PERC) Spans Gaps in Knowledge of LD

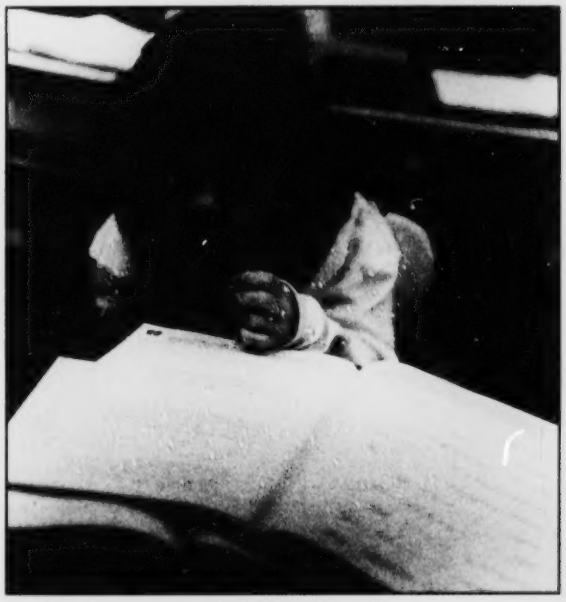
BY ALEXA CORTES CULWELL

EDUCATOR RESOURCES

No one would guess, upon meeting Charles Schwab, that the same man who founded the nation's largest discount brokerage firm has struggled to read since he was a boy. Schwab grew up with undiagnosed dyslexia—a fact that was not discovered until his own son was diagnosed with the condition some 30 years later.

"I just barely scraped by," Schwab recalls of his years struggling to keep up with reading assignments. "My solution back then was to read Classic Comic books to survive. When you say a picture is worth a thousand words, for me, it was." But Schwab's greatest assets were his strong self-esteem and several teachers who helped him focus on his strengths.

Over the years, Schwab learned ways not just to compensate for how his brain decodes words and processes information, but to capitalize on them. He transformed a reading disability into an ability to visualize complex issues and take creative leaps—traits that have helped him carry his company, Charles Schwab & Co., to the top of the financial world.



"I've always felt that I have more of an ability to envision, to be able to anticipate where things are going, to conceive a solution to a business problem, than people who are more sequential thinkers," he says.

Schwab built his business by empowering customers with information they can use to make wise investment decisions. In 1987, he and his wife, Helen, extended this philosophy when they founded a unique nonprofit organization to provide information to parents of children with learning differences: the Parents' Educational Resource Center, located in San Mateo, Califor-nia, just south of San Francisco.

A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING

Attempting to find help for a child with LD was no less trying for the Schwabs than it was to cope with dyslexia personally. They had a name for their son's disability, but they didn't have the information to fight the battle. Few people understood the condition or could offer strategies or resources to support their son's educational needs—even the host of teachers and pediatricians to whom the Schwabs turned.

Over the course of several years, they slowly collected information and identified resources that could help their son cope

with his learning difference. It was a bewildering and frustrating endeavor, but ultimately a successful one. Strategies, such as using books on tape from the nonprofit organization Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic, became key resources to help their son stay on top of his school reading assignments.

The Schwab's son was lucky. Public awareness of learning disabilities, or lack thereof, remains one of the most enduring and widespread problems the LD community must face. We know the manifestations of learning disabilities; we know how they impact individuals, families, and society in general; we know how and at what stages in children's development we can provide therapy to help them best realize their potential. Without support and understanding from institutions and individuals in the long chain of associations that contribute to a child's development, our greatest therapeutic advances mean little. Misinformed parents, teachers, or pediatricians can easily undermine the self-esteem, or compromise the education, of a child who learns differently.

A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

The many difficulties the Schwabs encountered while trying to find help for their son inspired them to help other families in the same position through their support of the Parents' Educational Resource Center (PERC). PERC is dedicated to promoting public awareness of learning disabilities and to providing information, guidance, and support for parents of children with learning differences.

The typical parent who visits PERC for the first time is confused, frustrated, and anxious. While some already have had their child tested, other parents know only that their son or daughter is falling behind in school. Some parents, wary of the "LD" label, think their child simply lacks motivation. Others have been told incorrectly that their child is mentally retarded. Their child, meanwhile, usually suffers from a debilitating lack of self-esteem.

For these families, PERC provides what Charles and Helen Schwab wished they could have found: a place to get the facts, consult with experts, and find guidance, support and referrals. For exasperated parents and children with LD, such resources make all the difference in the world.

In a typical month, PERC's professional educational consultants field nearly 1,000 phone calls and in-person inquiries from parents seeking information on learning differences. First-time visitors to the Center are assisted by resource consultants who orient parents, demystifying learning disabilities and outlining the many routes to assistance they can follow. The Center's resource library provides a wealth of information on particular areas of need, and an extensive referral database puts parents in touch with education specialists, tutors, and pediatricians.

SPREADING PUBLIC AWARENESS

PERC's efforts at public awareness and outreach include extensive contact with parents, teachers, pediatricians, and others in the learning disabilities field. Nationally, PERC is involved in a variety of public awareness initiatives.

The Center publishes a free quarterly newsletter, *Parent Journal*, with an international circulation, and regularly engages in educational programs and special outreach projects. Each year, PERC hosts several parent conferences featuring renowned experts in the fields of learning disabilities and education.

Recently, PERC joined forces with the Coordinated Campaign for Learning Disabilities, a national task force composed of prominent LD organizations and communications and media professionals working to develop and implement a united public awareness strategy for the entire U.S.

PERC also has recently collaborated with Dr. Mel Levine of The University of North Carolina Center for Learning and Development on the formulation of a 5th-grade curriculum called *The Mind That's Mine.*™ The curriculum was designed to help regular education 5th-grade students acquire a better understanding of how different abilities enable them to develop the skills they need to succeed academically and socially. It is being released nationally in the winter of 1997.

In April 1996, with PERC funding and development, San Francisco's technologically sophisti-

cated new Main Library became the nation's first public library to include a Resource Collection for Learning Differences. The Resource Collection includes books, audio tapes, videos, community resource files, and an information and referral database, all of which have been modeled after PERC's own extensive collections and services. The Collection also features technology to assist patrons with LD.

Perhaps the most ambitious public awareness effort initiated by PERC has been the development of a comprehensive learning disability information and resource kit. *Bridges To Reading*™ is a user-friendly package of learning disabilities information, strategies, and resources, designed to help parents no matter where they live. The kit consists of strategy-based booklets, audio tapes, reference guides, a children's activity booklet, and other items which convey much of the information the Schwabs and PERC have collected over the past eight years. The kit is available to families, schools, and libraries nationwide, and has even been used in England.

'I've always felt that I have more of an ability to envision, to be able to anticipate where things are going, to conceive a solution to a business problem, than people who are more sequential thinkers'

Since *Bridges To Reading* was first produced in 1995, a supplemental technology guide has been developed in collaboration with Frostig Center for Educational Therapy. *Technology in the Home: A Guide for Parents of Children with Learning Difference* is intended to help parents understand how technology can help their children with LD, what technologies are available, and how to best integrate them into the home. The guide will be the ninth booklet in the *Bridges to Reading* series, and will be available separately through PERC.

LOOKING FORWARD

Over the past year, PERC's services have expanded at unprecedented rates. Library usage is up 50 percent, information and referral database searches have increased 250 percent, and resource consultant appointments have grown more than 300 percent. Yet for every parent PERC has helped, millions more are still struggling the way Charles and Helen Schwab once did to find help for their child.

In October 1996, the Schwab Foundation will feature a three-part symposium in San Francisco with Dr. Mel Levine, a leading specialist in the field of learning disabilities. The symposium will have more than 8,000 participants, and will include one day with clinicians, one day with community members, and a teacher training day. More than 5,000 public and private school teachers from San Francisco schools will participate in the training.

PERC will soon be even more accessible and helpful to parents in the U.S. and around the world, as it establishes its presence on the World Wide Web. The PERC home page will include an online version of *Bridges to Reading*, a collection of LD resources and information, and will offer links to a host of other sites devoted to learning differences.

PERC is dedicated to increasing public awareness of learning disabilities and to assisting the parents of children with LD. The Center's ultimate aim is to help children with LD gain self-esteem and to maximize their potential in school and throughout their lives.

To Charles Schwab, it is a very personal campaign. "I'd love the world to know about learning differences and what you can do to help these kids become major contributors in their adult lives," he says. "I see a world where the people who look at things from different perspectives can see wonderful solutions to problems that might not have occurred to someone who knows a vast reservoir of facts but can't visualize that next step or take that next leap." ■

Editor's Note: Alexa Cortes Culwell is the Executive Director of the Parents' Educational Resource Center in San Mateo, California.

THE CHALLENGE OF INCLUSIONARY EDUCATION

A Collaborative Model

BY ANGELA M. WILKINS

Public schools face a major challenge as students with special needs re-enter mainstream classrooms. Through collaboration with a special school's outreach program, public schools can meet the challenge of providing educational programs designed to address the wide variety of learning needs in the classrooms of the 1990's.

In the 1970's and 80's it was generally accepted that in order to receive appropriate instruction, children with special needs should be pulled out of their classrooms to work with specialists. Many educators today believe that it is both feasible and cost effective to work with some of these students in the mainstream. Although opinion is divided on the benefits of inclusion, enthusiasm stems more from a social and emotional focus rather than from academic considerations. If inclusion is to be successful, the argument should be how, not where, students are taught.

WORKING TOWARD SUCCESSFUL INCLUSION

All individuals do not learn in the same way. In many classrooms, however, teachers use the same instructional methods for all students. The only variables are repetition, pacing, motivational activities, and, all too frequently, lower expectations. Yet, students continue to fail to learn to read and write, and teachers remain frustrated because they know that they are not reaching all of their students. If inclusion is to be successful, teachers will need comprehensive knowledge about a variety of instructional methodologies specifically designed for students who learn differently. The 1994 edition of *Their World* (pp.101-104) included an important article prepared by the NCLD's Professional Advisory Board which states, "Given that inclusion, as an educational policy will be paramount in our children's educational experience, success, and outcomes, a number of critical conditions must be in place in schools and classrooms to ensure its effectiveness." The Board listed eight essential considerations:

1. Classroom teachers and special educators perceive that they have the skills to adapt instruction to meet the needs of children with learning disabilities.

2. Classroom teachers and special educators are capable of communicating and collaborating with one another about individual children's needs using a common language.

3. Data exist demonstrating that

children with LD who manifest severe reading deficits can be taught effectively in an inclusion setting.

4. Data exist demonstrating that children with LD who manifest severe oral language deficits can be taught effectively in an inclusion setting.

5. Data exist demonstrating that children with LD who manifest deficits in mathematics calculation and reasoning can be taught effectively in an inclusion classroom.

6. Classroom teachers routinely plan for the individual needs of students with learning disabilities.

7. Instructional grouping procedures practiced in general education classrooms are designed to meet the individual learning needs of students with LD.

8. General education teachers are receptive to the logistical and instructive demands of inclusion classrooms.

Citing various studies for each condition, NCLD concluded that unfortunately none of these conditions was then being met.

If inclusion is to be successful, teachers will need comprehensive knowledge about a variety of instructional methodologies specifically designed for students who learn differently

THE CARROLL SCHOOL

Over the past seven years, The Carroll School, an independent school for students with language-learning difficulties, has worked successfully with more than 70 schools and school districts throughout the United States. The schools served ranged from inner-city schools for the emotionally and behaviorally disadvantaged, to affluent suburban schools, to small rural schools, and to challenging independent schools. The collaboration of public and special needs schools has proven both cost effective and successful in helping teachers better understand and meet the needs of their students.

Since 1972, teachers have come to Carroll School to take courses to refine and develop their skills in teaching reading, writing, and spelling. In 1989, in response to an increasing number of requests from school administrators to work collaboratively, the school founded an outreach program, The Garside Institute for Teacher Training (GIFTT), to provide similar training to public and independent school teachers in their own classrooms. Individually designed to meet the needs of each school or school district, GIFTT programs introduce teachers to alternative instructional methods based on alphabetic-phonetic, multisensory, Orton-Gillingham and Project Read approaches. Combining workshops, demonstration lessons, observations, and consultations, programs include such topics as phonics, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, expressive language, and study skills.

Proven successful in a wide variety of school settings for many decades, the Orton-Gillingham Approach is specifically designed for students who have difficulty learning to read, write, or spell. It is an alphabetic-phonetic approach in which the concepts and principles of language are taught directly using a variety of multisensory techniques. Starting with the smallest, simplest units of language, and proceeding to increasingly larger, more complex units, reading and writing are taught as interacting disciplines. Because the principles and patterns of language are taught directly, the use of logic and linguistic analysis helps students to compensate for their difficulties in coping with the symbols of language.

PROJECT READ

Believing that children should receive appropriate instruction before they fail, Dr. Mary Lee Enfield and Victoria Greene developed Project Read (also funded as an NCLD replication grant) to meet the learning needs of students who were having difficulty learning to read and write. They recognized the effectiveness of the Orton-Gillingham instruction in their schools' resource rooms and modified it for use in general education classrooms. The same principles (direct instruction, systematic and multisensory delivery) were also applied to the teaching of reading comprehension and written expression.

Developed in 1969, Project Read is a mainstream, total language arts program that provides a true alternative instructional approach to a school's developmental reading program. The goals and objectives of Project Read are the same as for any language arts curriculum. The curriculum, however, is presented differently and is specifically designed for individuals who do not learn inductively and who do not see the patterns of language. Students learn not only by seeing and hearing but also by doing. All strands of the curriculum emphasize direct instruction in the structure of the language, problem solving strategies, and active student participation.

With three distinct strands, Project Read is a process-oriented approach that enables students to become independent learners. While the curriculum integrates all three strands: phonology, reading comprehension, and written expression, the focus in the primary grades is on learning how to read using a multisensory, alphabetic-phonetic Orton-Gillingham based approach. The comprehension strand emphasizes the underlying structure of narrative, expository, and procedural text, and teaches students a process for gathering, organizing, and classifying information. The written expression strand begins with the structure of the simple sentence and progresses to increasingly complex sentences. Students learn a systematic process for writing well-developed paragraphs and texts based on their understanding of narrative and exposition.

Project Read is also a powerful staff development tool. It provides a model for direct, multisensory instruction on the structure of the language and helps teachers gain understanding of those who learn differently. Because general and special education teachers work together, there is continuity and predictability from grade to grade and between general and special education.

Project Read is now being used successfully in many schools and school districts throughout the United States. Similarly, the demand for GIFTT training continues to grow annually as school administrators realize that GIFTT helps teachers reach the "difficult to teach" students. LD students who return to general education classrooms of teachers who have had GIFTT training do well. School administrators comment that with this training their teachers are doing a more effective job. Many school districts also realize the importance of providing staff development and support for teachers beyond the initial training. Thus, nearly half of GIFTT's collaborations continue for two or more years.

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Although it is premature to report quantitative data, administrators, teachers, and students are increasingly encouraged by students' academic progress and by their corresponding growth in pride of accomplishment. The following comments are illustrative of the program's effectiveness:

In an inner city high school, one gang-involved senior who had dropped out of school, returned when he realized that as a result of GIFTT training (using Project Read) he was learning to read for the first time. He soon became the school's most effective model and advocate for younger students who might otherwise have thought it was "cool" to drop out.

A fifth grade student had been in school for six years but had not learned to read more than a few words. Using Project Read he began to see the logic of language. With great pride, he announced, "Now I have all the tools I need to read and write."

Observing a difference in their students' performance, teachers realize that they can help students to help themselves using what was learned from GIFTT. As one teacher with fifteen years experience phrased it, "This is the first time that I feel I am really teaching." Another teacher who had been eagerly awaiting her retirement said, "This training touched me personally. It rekindled all the warm, wonderful feelings I had about being a teacher. It reminded me that teaching is a part of me. It is a profession that I love. I return to my classroom a little older, and a lot wiser, and definitely a proponent of Project Read." ■

Editor's Note: Angela Wilkins is Director of the Garside Institute for Teacher Training, Lincoln, Massachusetts.

Portions of this article originally appeared in the 1991-92 issue of the Learning Disabilities Network publication, The Exchange, *Vol. 9, No. 2. They are reprinted with the permission of the Editor of* The Exchange.

SYSTEMATIC LANGUAGE

BY JANE FELL GREENE, Ed.D.

Despite the Federal recognition of learning disabilities as a handicapping condition in the late 1960's, a consistent system for diagnosis and classification has yet to be established. Unfortunately, identification has often been more closely related to the economic situation of schools or districts than to the needs of students. Many dyslexic students are never identified; many are never even evaluated. Disadvantaged students are more significantly at risk for functional illiteracy since parents of disadvantaged students cannot afford services in the private sector.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (United States Department of Education, 1994) revealed that literacy rates continue to decline. It has become popular to blame television and society in general for these failures. However, critical educational factors also contribute to this national travesty. Most districts or schools continue to adopt a single, conventional reading/language program for all students. A basic mismatch between curriculum content and the needs of dyslexic students results in accelerating failure for an increasing number of students.

The problem extends far beyond the realm of the special education classroom. It is not unusual for general education teachers at the secondary level to face classes of students who are reading at a second grade equivalent. Year after year, students sit through classes without measurable gains in written language, because curriculum content passed them by long ago. Students who cannot adequately read, write, or spell are keenly aware of their problems. Students who never meet success lose motivation and are caught in a rapidly spinning spiral of failure. Both teachers and students are frustrated, and if students stop attending school altogether, they are lost.

It is well established that among delinquent youth, the incidence of learning disabilities is high. The cost to society is immeasurable. Clearly, successful programs for students must include social and vocational components. To break the cycle of failure and to afford students a real opportunity to succeed in society, educational components must ensure accelerated gains in reading, writing, and spelling.

NCLD INVOLVEMENT

NCLD sponsored a study which involved the re-education of adjudicated teenagers assigned to the New Orleans Marine Institute (NOMI), one of forty sites of the Associated Marine Institute (AMI), a nonprofit organization that employs a vocational/social-emotional/educational remediation program for this at-risk population. Students who were reading, writing, and spelling significantly below grade level were placed in a completely individualized structured language curriculum, Systematic Language, which had been designed on the basis of current research.

The Systematic Language project involved the development and implementation of an individualized, comprehensive, and integrated structured language curriculum. Difficulty with

the phoneme-grapheme correspondence code of English, resulting in deficits in phoneme awareness, represents a primary clinical criterion for dyslexia. Abundant evidence over twenty years documents phonological processing weaknesses among students who experienced delays in the acquisition of written language. It has also been established that for this population, the solution is the direct teaching of structured language.

SYSTEMATIC LANGUAGE

The Systematic Language curriculum used at NOMI integrated reading, writing, spelling, grammar, vocabulary, and usage. Organized in five sequential sections, the critical components of the Systematic Language project include: individualization (based on each student's level of mastery), concept-based curriculum (requiring application of concepts), direct and intensive teaching of phonemic and linguistic awareness, and direct and intensive teaching of the morphologic and syntactic principles of English.

Research has provided the basis we need for improvements, and research-based solutions cost far less than current programs

THE STUDENTS SPEAK

At the end of their six weeks of enrollment, NOMI students were asked to write about their experiences. Just a few weeks earlier, these same students had not been simply reluctant about writing, they had refused to write. Some of their responses follow:

"I like a little bit because it help me to read better. School don't teach yu a neuGh." (Unit 2)

"I think I could finish the Systematic Language if they had it in regular school. It was not like this they was not teacheing me that much I really wasn't learning at all but now I'm learning something and I feel good about it...now I can read better, I can spell, and I can recognize letters." (I am on Unit 10.)

"I think that it's easyer because it's all put together in a good Learning System. I think that most people learn faster then other's and sysematic Language give the teacher more time to deal with each student. When I was i public school, "if I didn't understand it when it was tought, that was just your problem I think systmatic Language is helping me a lot." (I am on Unit 19.)

SEEKING SOLUTIONS

Millions of students are placed in general and special education classrooms where the curriculum is unrelated to their needs. Given texts that students can't read, teachers are told to "break it down." When students come with severe deficits in basic literacy areas, teachers cannot replace six or seven years of education by using accommodations and modifications as intervention.

If we are serious about becoming a nation of readers, we must approach our problem using the scientific method. We must begin by observing the reality of current curriculum content in our schools. Band-aid solutions for illiteracy in American schools have clearly failed. Research has provided the basis we need for improvements, and research-based solutions cost far less than current programs. We shouldn't be surprised when students who find no success in school search for alternatives in the streets. ■

Jane Fell Greene, Ed.D. is the Director of the Institute for Continuing Education at Basics Plus, Inc., in New Orleans, Louisiana.

TEACHING TOLERANCE

BY HARRIET ARNOLD

EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

Abe, a diminutive six-year-old, returned to school after a two-day absence and discovered his Lego rocket ship had been dismantled, its pieces recycled to form other children's constructions. His eight classmates, all learning disabled children aged five, six, and seven, having responded to the musical theme which is the daily call to Morning Meeting, were gathering at the round table which serves as our classroom's social, academic, and emotional center. As the music ended, Abe screamed at a decibel level capable of reaching an outer planet, "My rocketship is destroyed!" and turned over the bin which con-

tained enough Legos to build an adequate space station. The din was followed by a hush broken only by Abe's rageful sobs and screams. Moments passed before Tony offered the words which began the process of diffusing the tantrum. "Abe, you're awful upset but you have to tolerate it." A flood of language followed as each of the children offered apologies, solace, and strategies.

Sally, whose perceptual and motoric delays made building anything difficult, empathized, "I hate when people touch my stuff." Ari, whose profound language, organizational, and attentional deficits impeded his own social abilities, turned his head and announced, "I'm ignoring this big tantrum."

"It's hard to tolerate this noise," Aaron stated as he grabbed his thumb in his fist and exhaled deeply.

Mark and Bill, the eldest and most socially appropriate of the group flashed knowing glances at each other as they said, "We're sorry, Abe. We'll help you rebuild it after Meeting."

This incident took place in February, after many months of direct instruction intended to teach children to understand their own emotions and feelings and those of others. This is a long-term process but it is a necessity for the learning disabled child who is often overly sensitive to visual and auditory distractions, and can be overzealous in protecting personal space and property. Abe's classmates did not begin the year with these skills. In September, a classmate's tantrum would have had a ripple effect, causing others to behave in equally inappropriate ways. Aaron, an exceedingly impulsive child and a literal interpreter of rules, would have likely responded by physically seeking to punish whomever had destroyed Abe's property. Ari, unable to express his own discomfort, would have begun his own tantrum. Tony, who began the year terrified by such displays, would have tried to run from the room or bang his head on the floor. Others would have either withdrawn or crowded around, drawn as rubber-neckers to a ten car pile-up.

How did this transformation occur? It was the result of supplying strategies and language, placing the immediate problem in a context which the child could recognize, organize, and ultimately use to develop an appropriate solution. The adult's role was critical early in the process but diminished as the peer group learned to use these tools and modeled them in their own struggles.

I begin by telling the children that they have a very powerful tool right in their own brain. This tool can protect them from many things and they can use it anywhere and anytime.

THE PROCESS

Very early in the year the children should be introduced to the concept of ignoring. This should be done during a regular discussion period, like meeting time or circle time, not during a crisis. I begin by telling the children that they have a very powerful tool right in their own brain. This tool can protect them from many things and they can use it anywhere and anytime. When they are rabid with anticipation I ask one of the more verbal children to say something mean to me. After assurances that my powerful tool will protect me, someone will tell me that I am stupid or dumb. Affecting a blank stare I whip my head away from the offender and maintain the pose for a few seconds. Triumphantly, I tell them that my powerful tool is ignoring, and it worked. Ignoring can be defined as pretending you cannot hear or see what someone is saying or doing. I then ask if they think they can ignore and we rehearse the action and role play. This must be done with volunteers, as some children may be too sensitive to tolerate being called a name, even in role playing. For those who do not volunteer, try to have them ignore a sound or a visual distraction. We practice the skill many times before it is used in a real situation. When the children seem comfortable with the concept, choose a distracting situation which occurs during a full-group time. The sound of a jack-hammer under our window or other children walking noisily through the halls are neutral events which provide a good example for using the skill. Eventually,

we use ignoring to screen out other's inappropriate behavior. For example, if Ari is singing to himself while we are reading a story, I will ask the group if they can ignore his behavior before I address Ari and offer him a strategy to help him stay focused.

Focusing tools are often relaxation techniques which also provide additional sensory input that may help the child to stop distracting, self-stimulating behaviors. Primary among these is a breathing technique akin to acupuncture and yoga. The child holds one thumb in the other fist while exhaling deeply. The technique is taught to a ditty sung to the tune of "If you're happy and you know it," replacing the lyrics with:

If you're silly and you know it
Grab your thumb

Most important in initiating these tools is a calm and patient attitude. The leader of the group must develop an understanding of what is the root cause of the inappropriate behavior. Generally, it is an inability to express discomfort caused either by language or attentional deficits. Once adults recognize that a tantrum or withdrawal is really an attempt to communicate, it is incumbent upon them to acknowledge what they are seeing. This should be a simple statement of the observable facts. In the case of Abe's tantrum, it might be, "I see that your rocketship is broken. You are very upset. Can you use words to tell us what happened?" The group should also be addressed in order to reassure them that the situation is under control and to gain their support. It is sometimes helpful to dim or turn off the lights while talking to the group. This not only focuses attention away from the child with the problem, but also has a calming effect. The statement to the group should engage them by drawing on their own experience. "Abe is upset that his rocket is broken. Can you think of words that might help him?"

When all of these techniques are being used spontaneously by most of the group it is time to acknowledge that there are situations which cannot be altered and must be tolerated. Physical injuries are often the first issues which demand tolerance and they are emotionally accessible to all of us. Sally, whose visual perceptual and motoric deficits caused her to fall and bump into things, often cried inconsolably over minor injuries. She had been seriously hurt and hospitalized many times in her young life, was easily frightened by any fall, and was unsure of the severity of an injury. Efforts to comfort only increased her agitation as she perceived it as confirmation that she was badly hurt. She was able to hear, through her squeals, an honest assessment of her condition and an estimate of how long she would need to tolerate the pain. The intervention would involve acknowledgement, distraction and tolerance. "I see you have bumped your knee. It is not bleeding and nothing is broken so let's sing a song while you tolerate it. We'll see if it feels better when we finish the song." After a few months I heard an exchange between Sally and a classmate after Sally hit her finger on a toy. Beth said, "Oh, you hurt poor little finger. Lets jump up and down while you're tolerating it."

And so they did, as I beamed with pride and tolerated the noise. ■

Editor's Note: Harriet Arnold teaches at the Churchill School in New York City.

The New York Jets Salute NCLD

BEST WISHES TO NCLD

Mary and Peter Kalikow

ON TEACHING SHAKESPEARE TO STUDENTS WITH LD

BY TERRY D. COWGILL

If it is true, as media spin doctors often say, that overexposure can kill a good thing, then the task of teaching Shakespeare to high school students can be especially daunting. Indeed to some of the learning disabled seniors in my fall term Shakespeare course, the Bard was an object of naked contempt, rivaled only by the College Board in the fear and loathing department.

"Why do we have to study this guy?"... "Why do people make such a big deal out of him?"... "Why does he write in language like that? Who does he think he is?" These are just some of the questions I have been fielding on the first day of this honors course, which I have been teaching for a couple of years now. Neither petulant nor merely oppositional, these queries bear a degree of honesty that cannot be denied. Nor are they particularly original, as both learning disabled and mainstream students have been complaining about Shakespeare for centuries. My job was to bring the students around to Robert Graves' way of thinking. "The remarkable thing about Shakespeare," wrote the British poet and author,

"is that he is really very good—in spite of all the people who say he is very good."

WHY THE COMEDIES?

When I originally decided to offer a Shakespeare section in the fall for the senior honors students, a comment made by a student in one of my eleventh grade sections influenced me profoundly. When asked what he knew about the Bard, he replied, "Oh, yeah, he writes old plays that are very serious where everybody winds up dead on the floor." Bearing this uniquely adolescent perspective in mind, I became resolute in my opinion that the course should comprise only selected comedies, for this was not the first time that an eleventh grader had remarked that Shakespeare was either a grim tragedian or an antiquated dweeb who couldn't find humor in a door-slamming French farce. Furthermore, the playful tone of these comical plays would serve to alleviate much of the apprehension felt by my students, most of whom have language-based learning disabilities that make deciphering Elizabethan verse a Herculean task.

'A MERRY WAR'

In response to the common misconception that Shakespeare was a humorless drone, I assigned for summer reading *Much Ado About Nothing*, which corresponded quite nicely with two of Shakespeare's darker and more widely-read tragedies, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*. All three plays also involve the manufacture of evidence, which dovetailed with accusations in the O.J. Simpson trial, then in its ninth month. The play also presented an opportunity to explore the term "oxymoron," which sounds more like a sophisticated adolescent insult than a literary term. But a lesson on Shakespearian insults would come later in the trimester, for the "merry war" waged between Beatrice and Benedict functioned as an apt metaphor for the relationship between my students and me.

The first play we read together was *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. A personal favorite of mine, *Dream* is an often confusing tapestry of mistaken identity, shifting allegiances, wanton mischief, and envy run amok. An objective lecture on the play is made more difficult by the fact that I had played Oberon as an undergraduate and was intimately familiar with his petty jealousies and "hateful imperfection(s)." I therefore did the only thing I could, which was to turn this subjectivity to my advantage.

Most teachers use dramatic readings when teaching dramas, but few are fortunate enough to have played one of the roles themselves. As I emphasize often, especially when students complain of Shakespeare's verbosity, his plays were written to be seen and heard, not merely read. This is particularly true for learning disabled students, many of whom are seasoned visual and auditory learners. Dramatic readings can also be a problem in such a setting, as students with decoding difficulties struggle noticeably with reading aloud. Yet the patience exhibited by these students when one of their colleagues stumbles through a speech is remarkable. There are no sarcastic comments about verbal ineptitude, as might be the case with an LD student in a mainstream school. In this environment, one need not feel ashamed of being different.

THE CONTEMPORARY CONNECTION

One of the first scenes we read aloud was between Demetrius and Helena, in which the former tries to convince the latter that, notwithstanding her interminable blandishments, he cannot possibly love her. The passion with which the two students read the scene, which combines pointed insult with self-loathing, rather surprised me. Perhaps the academic experience these kids had before arriving here was an amalgam of these two emotions. Whatever the case, the reading of this scene, along with the reenactment of the clowning of Bottom and his buffoons in "Pyramus and Thisby," served to reinforce the notion that Shakespeare, for all his archaic language and his sophisticated poetic meters, wrote about problems and themes which are just as modern as those found on *Oprah*. A showing of the video version of Joseph Papp's Central Park production further revealed Shakespeare's erotic sensibilities.

A reading of *Twelfth Night* also unveiled a litany of contemporary issues: the role of women, Puritanical people, the use of deceptive language,

celebrity gossip, class distinctions, and the advance of the unworthy rich. My students' initial protests notwithstanding, Shakespeare was herein exposed as an enlightened visionary who was far ahead of his time--neither a snobbish prude nor an idyllic curmudgeon. As is the case with virtually any classroom in which Shakespeare is the subject, the more modern analogies that can be drawn the better, for almost any attempt to humanize a distant author reaps dividends and will quickly put an end to student moans about a lack of relevance.

The "merry war" continued with *As You Like It* and *Taming of the Shrew*. After a lesson involving "make-your-own" Shakespearian insults, a discussion ensued on an essay entitled *An Argument For Comedy* by renowned literary critic, Northrup Frye. His thesis served as a foundation for our reading of *As You Like It*. There are two worlds in which many of Shakespeare's comedies take place, the argument goes; there is the closed world, comprising the artificial, the cities, governments, and courts, and there is the green world, or the countryside, where conflicts are generally resolved. Frye's treatise became cannon fodder for some terrific student essays, some of which attacked his theory and some of which supported it. "Innocence, purity and the green world go way back," wrote one student. "For example, the biblical couple Adam and Eve took a liking to the outdoors." Leaving aside the laughable question of where else the two had to go, the observation, like many others I read, fed into the felicitous notion that the subjects that make up these plays are timeless.

Learning disabled students respond to Shakespeare much like other kids do: some like him and some don't

SEEING A PRODUCTION

Our study of *As You Like It* culminated in a visit to The Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, where a decidedly modern production of the play was being performed. I thoroughly enjoyed the production, but some of the students objected to it on the grounds that (of all things!) the production was too modern and that it had strayed too far from its Elizabethan roots. This was a role I was unaccustomed to playing in our "merry war"—that of the hipster defending a contemporary directorial view. When we returned to school and began *Taming of the Shrew*, I knew that I had nonetheless helped some students to see the light. In the Induction of the play, one of the sexist lords lectures an actor about the potential unsuitability of having a boy play a woman: "And if the boy have not a woman's gift/To rain a shower of commanded tears..." "Yeah, that's sexist all right," replied one of the male students, "but it sure is a more elegant way of saying that the boy might not be able to cry on cue." At that moment of unanimous agreement, I knew I had made at least some progress in winning our "war."

WHAT IS 'MULTISENSORY?'

People often ask me what it is like to teach Shakespeare to LD kids. "It must be really tough for them," is one of the most common remarks I encounter. "They probably like him about as much as Shaw did," said a colleague at a mainstream independent school. George Bernard Shaw, never a great fan of the Bard, was known to have said: "It would positively be a relief to me to dig him up and throw stones at him." Having taught this elective, I would reply in a manner that might surprise other educators. Learning disabled students respond to Shakespeare much like other kids do: some like him and some don't. "What kinds of special teaching techniques do you have to use?" I am often asked. The answer is that, aside from being multisensory in approach, you try to win your students over in much the same way you would any group of students. Besides, what is "multisensory," but just another phrase for good teaching? ■

Editor's Note: Terry D. Covgill is Head of the English Department at the Forman School in Litchfield, Connecticut.

SUCCEEDING THROUGH THE ARTS

BY SALLY SMITH

"When I danced I was completely happy and forgot that I couldn't read."

"Once my uncle showed me how to use a hammer and nails, and I found I could make things. That was always the one bright spot in my life."

"I hated school except for that one period a day in art or music. I was alive then. People could see the person I was in the summertime, at home, everywhere but at school."

"Sometimes I thought my trombone was my only friend."

CREATIVE ARTS FOR CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

The arts engage the learner's soul, mind and body. They help learning become part of a person's very special being. All the art forms offer entry into academic learning and an opportunity to reinforce skills that have been introduced. The arts can be a savior, a respite, a solace, that give children with learning disabilities and other non-traditional learners a chance to express themselves and feel good about themselves.

Young children use the arts to make sense of their world. They understand touch, gesture, rhythm, tone, and movement before they understand words. They babble, croon, and sing before they speak. They color, draw, and paint before they form letters. They dance and leap and act out stories before they can read.

Children can enjoy themselves and learn through art forms while picking up all kinds of information and processes useful for a lifetime of learning. The arts help relate the present to the past and the future and add deeper dimensions to history, geography, economics, literature, science, and civics. Students who have difficulty with the symbols of reading, algebra, chemistry, and foreign languages can often manage symbols in the arts because they can assign meaning to unique symbols and arrange them in their own way to make sense.

Children learn best when they are partners in learning and the arts demand that they be active partners, not passive learners. Many youngsters who are failing in school cannot learn through traditional, verbal approaches (being lectured to, remembering information, and writing it down). Some of them need to see images; they need to touch and to move and to talk about what they are doing, depending upon their own unique styles of learning.

Although one thinks of the arts as serious work, one associates much laughter and camaraderie with putting on a play or a dance, building something, painting, playing in a percussion ensemble, or singing together. Crises happen all the time in the arts and they are not the end of the world. Something can always be done; improvising, using strategies, ingenuity are part of the process. Many children with learning disabilities feel their mistakes are proof of their worthlessness. The artist, by feeling free to experiment, makes mistakes and learns from them. Through this model, children are permitted to make mistakes and survive. Many great works of art have

emanated from mistakes.

HUMOR IS GOOD MEDICINE

Nothing dispels an atmosphere of tension faster than laughter. If children can begin to see the funny side of a bad situation, relief is sure to follow. Artists who can laugh at themselves in an easy, accepting way are important models for children who often see themselves as a source of worry to others and despair to themselves. Humor can be particularly useful in helping children to overcome immaturities, and to address qualities of rigidity and such characters as clinging to the familiar and insisting that there is only one way to do things.

ART ENCOURAGES CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING

Through art forms, artists can learn to be more flexible. They can develop ways to transition from one activity to another. In music, a drumbeat can be the transition. In painting, a color can be the signal, and in drama or dance, a prop or a specific movement can serve as symbols of transition. Although each art has its own structure, there are many different ways to achieve artistic objectives. Children should be encouraged to approach tasks in different, even unorthodox ways. Doing so can help the alternative learner grasp scientific principles in woodwork, see the fundamentals of geometry in straw sculpture, learn vocabulary in drama, and match the concept of intervals in music and mathematics.

Children learn best when they are partners in learning and the arts demand that they be active partners, not passive learners

ART FACILITATES THE LEARNING PROCESS

Underlying the artistic process is the need to preserve the integrity of the specific art form while systematically teaching the child the very learning skills necessary in order to succeed at school. While the child concentrates on his product in the arts, the artist concentrates on the learning process, which can involve either readiness skills or pure academic material. For many children with learning disabilities, academic content, such as mathematical functions, grammar, syntax, and spelling, can be taught and made to stick through the arts. For example, a vowel can dance between two consonants; computing methods can be "invented" to save a flock of sheep in a make-believe encampment in ancient Syria.

ROBIN'S READING

Robin loved music. She was very bright, but was not able to break the reading code. In her music class, a system using red poker chips (loud sounds) and yellow chips (soft sounds) was employed. When she read chips in red-red-yellow sequence, she knew this meant loud-loud-soft, and she played these sounds on a drum or xylophone. As these left-to-right patterns of sound became more complex and as she grew more adept at "reading" the symbols (which also became more complex, varying in size and shape), Robin's ability to decode letters and words in the classroom improved.

DIAGNOSTIC INFORMATION

The arts not only introduce information and reinforce skills but can be employed as aids to assess levels of learning. The kindergartner who cannot repeat a series of three taps may have problems responding to sound, hearing sequences of sounds, or reproducing sounds. This could affect his learning to read. The student who works well on one art form but not in others is providing significant data about where his strengths and talents do and do not lie. An analysis of the art forms in which a child excels gives clues to the components needed for the child to learn most effectively.

CREATIVE CLUES

Christina's dance and graphic art abilities were superior, but she disliked music and drama and did not want to participate in either. A formal assessment later revealed that her auditory

discrimination abilities were poor and that, despite normal hearing, she could not distinguish the differences between sounds nor could she decipher the blending of sounds. Her language skills were well below her age.

A teacher discovered that four of his eleven-year-old pupils could not move backward. Their classroom teacher discovered that the same four students were unable to do subtraction. Together, the dance teacher and the classroom teacher uncovered these students language weaknesses in using the past tense.

A woodwork teacher-sculptor observed that Eric could not hit a nail on the head with a hammer and could not line up his body in a position that made it possible for his eyes and hands to work together; additionally, he had great difficulty focusing on a printed page. When the sculptor shared his observations, the reading teacher realized that Eric's body position interfered with what he saw, and was then able to help Eric re-position himself in a way that helped him focus.

BUILDING POSITIVE SELF-IMAGE

All art forms can help ignite the whole learning process. They capture children's excitement, interests and passions, and can be great motivators. By producing tangible results, artistic outcomes evoke feedback and praise from audiences. They build a sense of self worth, confidence, and self-esteem.

Martin loved drama. Off stage, he was clumsy and awkward, always tripping and bumping into things. His eye-hand coordination was so poor that he could barely color, use scissors, or do jigsaw puzzles, and his writing was like chicken scratch. On the stage, he was a transformed person—majestic, fierce, and commanding.

WORKING AS PART OF A GROUP

Art forms tend to draw people together. They foster cooperation, group work, and helpfulness. They can promote a deeper understanding of

other civilizations, different forms of worship, different practices. Diversity and difference are prized in the artist's world. Our schools, too, must learn to treasure difference. Children with learning disabilities must learn that "different is not bad" and that their differences often make them more interesting and talented.

Children with learning disabilities often experience difficulty working in a group, tending to be egocentric, and self-absorbed. The art forms engage them in ways that promote the group process.

ARTS CREATE A FORUM FOR CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

All of the art forms require problem solving after the basic skills have been mastered. In painting, problems of size, shape, and color, must be addressed along with how best to express an idea. In modern dance, problems involve types of movement and the moods they convey and the use of large or contained space. In the arts, students are expected to find their own individual answers to questions, to try them out, then criticize their own work constructively, and self-correct if necessary. What is so good about arts-infused learning is the variety of possibilities. There is no "right way," no single correct answer.

Nothing dispels an atmosphere of tension faster than laughter. If a child can begin to see the funny side of a bad situation, relief is sure. Artists who can laugh at themselves in an easy, accepting way are important models for children who often see themselves as a source of worry to others and despair to themselves.

ARTISTS AS TEACHERS

Artists are usually nontraditional, able to find unorthodox ways to teach youngsters. Problem-solving, ingenuity, resourcefulness, flexibility—all greatly needed in work with children with learning disabilities—are common traits among artists. Artists are often excited by the challenge of trying to reach and teach the children with special learning needs and will share their time and talent. At times, artists can find abilities that may not show up in the classroom.

ARTS SERVE AS ORGANIZERS

Students with learning disabilities are atypical learners whose responses and behaviors are, at times, not abnormal but rather more appropriately seen in much younger children. They are often disorganized and lack many basic skills usually acquired in the preschool years which are the foundations necessary for academic learning. Through the arts, a child can order his world, make sense of what he knows, turn muscular activity into thought, and change ideas into action. A panoply of art forms offer youngsters with learning disabilities a chance to learn while enjoying aesthetic experiences that lead to future pleasures as members of an audience and/or as artists themselves.

Many children with special learning needs have trouble integrating several processes at once. These students look like they are not paying attention to anything but, in fact, are attending to every stimulus in the environment. They are bombarded by sights, sounds, and movements in the room and often cannot assign priorities to stimuli, choosing which is most important. Film-making activities can provide a model for "frame and focus." The drumbeat in music focuses attention, as does the dramatic voice, the large gesture, and the graphic organizer. Through the intensity of art experiences, children can ignore footsteps in the hall, light tumbling in through the blinds, the arm of a neighbor brushing against a chair, or the jangling earrings of the teacher. The arts can be taught in a way to help students filter out what is important from what is unimportant.

COLOR, SHAPE, FORM, AND SOUND

Discriminating through the hands, the eyes, the ears, and all the senses is part of artistic experience. Learning to look and listen, and remembering what is seen and heard are emphasized in the arts. Through art forms, youngsters with learning disabilities can be helped to develop and strengthen the perceptual skills which form the foundations for future learning.

BRIAN'S ROLES

Brian was asked to play the part of a strong king and then a weak king in his drama class. From his portrayal, the characters appeared to be identical, although he knew they were different. He could not isolate the main characteristic of each king and was unable to integrate gesture, movement, and speech. By teaching him different ways to understate or exaggerate his walk and slowly adding associated gestures, facial expressions, and oral commands, he learned to act the parts. His increased capacity to organize and integrate effectively in drama also carried over into the classroom.

ARTS HELP STUDENTS LEARN SEQUENCES

Discipline and a progression of steps underlie every artistic endeavor. Students with learning disabilities need experiences that have clear beginnings, middles, and ends. Understanding sequences is vital for the child who can talk to you about Homer or gravity but cannot tell you the days of the week in order, name the seasons, count to twenty, or say the alphabet in proper sequence. Knowing what to do first, what happens next, and planning for the last steps is as crucial for a crafts project as it is for drama or dance. The same organization is necessary for effective reading.

BARNABY'S WOODWORK

Barnaby was particularly successful at working with wood. The wood was strong and stood up well to his clumsy handling. A sculptor helped him draw a basic design for a chair, reminding him that it did not have to be great art. With a design in hand, Barnaby had to figure out what materials he needed and through informal discussion, they agreed upon what had to be done first, what the next step would be, and then the next. As he proceeded, Barnaby took over the verbalization process, explaining what he had done and what he would do next. As the chair took shape, Barnaby repeatedly measured it against his own body as a source of reference. Before he was permitted to take it home, Barnaby had to teach another child to make a chair or explain the process clearly to another person. In this way, the experience became organic—a part of his being.

LIMITING THE ENVIRONMENT WITHOUT LIMITING THE CHILD

Youngsters with learning disabilities need to deal effectively with the freedom that is usually ascribed to the expressive arts. While a teacher can be a focusing agent for these children, the material used can also be helpful.

For each project, the arts teacher must limit the student's space, time, and choices. The teacher must also monitor the materials used, amount of work to be done, number of directions given, and limit the amount of discussion that follows without limiting the child. Limiting options does not, however, mean limiting the child's ability for self-expression. In fact, parameters and borders will allow the student to organize time, space, and place. Clear, precise directions, given one step at a time, are a must.

Parameters and borders will allow the students to organize time, space, and place. Clear, precise directions, given one step at a time, are a must.

ALVIN AND MARY'S FOCUS ON FILM-MAKING

In film class, Alvin and Mary decided to create and film a melodrama. First, their teacher guided them to construct a plot for the story. When they actually started shooting the film, the filmmaker who was teaching them frequently reminded Alvin and Mary to "focus and frame," to keep their camera on the main action. The constant attention to visual focus in film-making paid off in their ability to give more attention to visual detail in their reading program. During the editing process, the filmmaker encouraged them to organize sequences to make the film interesting, exciting, and understandable. Mary and Alvin had to think clearly about the main point of their film, and to decide what should come first, next, and last.

Putting in music and sound effects helped them to understand how sound establishes mood. Alvin and Mary overcame their tendency to become easily confused and disorganized and to back out of situations. While making the film, they were not only having fun but also discovering new strategies to help them organize and integrate. They brought these strategies back into the classroom.

In ancient times the purpose of education was to expose children to adults with special talents so that they might absorb their wisdom and values. This continues to be a purpose of education. Vibrant human beings, actively engaged in their own intellectual and artistic pursuits and excited about learning, bring a contagious spirit of growth to children. The arts are essential to quality education and bring with them the spirit of the ages. ■

Editor's Note: Sally Smith is the Founder and Director of the Lab School in Washington, DC. She has written numerous books and is a member of the NCLD Professional Advisory Board.

ART AND MUSIC AS STRESS BUSTERS FOR LD CHILDREN

BY TAMMY LeNEVE

I am the mother of a 13 year-old son who has been diagnosed as learning disabled (LD) and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). My first suspicion that something was wrong was when I realized my son was delayed in his speech development. Until then, I thought he was a so-called "normal" child. Then, I began to notice other things, such as the seeming inability to remember the names of colors, shapes, numbers, the alphabet, or words that he wanted to use in speech.

STARTING SCHOOL

After he started school, some things he seemingly couldn't remember and other things that teachers and I deemed unimportant or not necessary to his schooling, he seemed to remember forever. What we as adults often forget is that everything children learn and remember is important to them, even if it seems unimportant to us. Maybe more of us should have that child-like quality.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

At home we would drill and drill on all the things that his mind would file away in his memory and could not recall. I knew he had those things stored in his memory banks because, in his frustration at being unable to recall facts, he would tell me that he knew them but his brain wouldn't give them to him. Sometimes he would tell me this at the top of his lungs and sometimes, in acute embarrassment, because he knew that we had just finished practicing those things that his brain refused to recall. In order to alleviate our frustration and

boredom at my attempts at trying to help him and for him to learn the facts he needed to learn, I tried anything and everything I could think of to make learning seem like a game.

FINDING WHAT WORKS

We would yell "slugbug" and the color every time we saw a Volkswagon bug. We would count how many red cars we saw or whatever caught our attention that day. We would sing the ABC song and any other song, especially if it had something to do with shapes, numbers, or colors. I would make sure plenty of paper and pencils were around. I would ask him to make me a number, a letter, or shape. He seemed to be able to do this with fair success. I discovered that when I made the shape, letter, or number, he couldn't tell me what it was with very much success. So we went back to objects we saw in our daily lives, and I would have him tell me what the items were. I have found that he learns some things quickly and others it seems that he never will, but when he does, he doesn't forget them. He may just have some difficulty recalling them and needs help to retrieve information. The more we practice, the better he gets. The key is not to be frustrated and give up but to persevere because the next day the situation seems brighter.

This really gives his self-esteem a much-needed boost. He needs something in his life that he is better at than most of his peers, and his artwork seems to be the ticket.

SOLUTIONS THROUGH THE ARTS

We have found ways to alleviate his frustration level. His artwork is one of those ways. He is a talented artist and his classmates at school tell him that they think he will grow up to draw cartoons for the Walt Disney Company. This really gives his self-esteem a much needed boost. He needs something in his life that he feels he is better at than most of his peers, and his artwork seems to be the ticket. Not only does he excel at drawing, but it also gives him a means of relaxation and an outlet for his frustrations. I have noticed the more he draws, the more relaxed he stays. I have him dating his artwork so that, when he grows to be an adult, he can look back and see the improvement he has made.

I have also found that music is an excellent form of relaxation for my son. He has started piano lessons. Classical music is his favorite. When his frustration level is high or he needs a quick form of relaxation, listening to music seems to be the best bet.

GROWING UP SUCCESSFUL AND HAPPY

I personally think that, for many LD students, the arts can be an excellent medium, either as a form of relaxation, or, possibly as a career choice. Many people with LD are misunderstood by the general public which has a tendency to think that the learning disabled are mentally retarded and are unable to learn and live productive lives. We definitely need to educate people. People with LD are often gifted, with a variety of positive traits such as an active imagination, creativity, boundless energy, and ingenuity. This list can go on and on if we only look at the positives instead of the negatives.

I have high hopes for this child of mine and I think he has some of the same high hopes for himself. My main goal at this moment in life is to help my son to grow up to be successful and happy with the career choice that he makes for himself. As his parent, I hope that I can do all within my ability to help him to reach his goals. His future goal is to become a scientist. He hasn't narrowed it down to a specific kind of science. When asked what kind of science, he says all kinds. Even if he does go into the scientific field, his artwork and music can be lifelong stress busters. ■

Editor's Note: Tammy LeNeve is the parent of a child with learning disabilities. She lives in Kansas.

STAGES OF LEARNING

The Performing Arts as a Teaching Tool

BY DAVID LIGHTFOOT

The Newgrange School has spent the last two years developing an educational program which uses the Performing Arts as a teaching tool for regular curriculum topics in the LD classroom. Led by a teacher with an arts-in-education background, the classes harness the power of playfulness and creativity in learners who are, in turn, motivated to participate fully and enthusiastically in class. The traditional barriers associated with the learning disabled chil-

dren's success in the classroom all but disappear as the students' environment transforms into an arena of imaginative play where students are encouraged to explore and express concepts new and old.

In the fall of '95, two groups of 12 students began learning through the performing arts in their Social Studies and Creative Writing classes. Two days per week, the teacher guided the students in special performance activities designed to cover part of the curriculum. The benefits of the experience have included long-term retention of the material, increased participation in class, stronger group cohesion, and most importantly, an excited feeling of success.

HOW IT WORKS

The program is designed with a simple idea in mind: children love to play. The key to integrating playful performances with education is to make the activities so much fun that the education in the subject matter seems to happen as a side effect. That is, if children are really enjoying their play, they will learn whatever it takes to continue to play successfully. The material is being conveyed in a playful way through theatre games and performances. Enjoyment of the material helps them to remember. Accomplishing this feeling requires two essential elements in the classroom. First, students must trust the teacher and each other enough to attempt new levels of self-expression through performing. Second, they must respect the idea of the stage enough to devote their bodies, voices, and imaginations to their work.

In Social Studies classes, students used the performing arts to learn about Viking exploration and New Jersey folklore

During the first weeks of the program, each class began with an introductory warm-up activity. The warm-ups were sometimes directly related to the curriculum and at other times were not. The goal of each warm-up depended upon the main activity planned for the day, but they all led to a stronger atmosphere of trust while developing the three tools of an actor: body, voice, and imagination. These warm-ups are ones currently used by professional actors, and students participated with great vigor as they knew this was a "serious" form of play. With the knowledge that what they were doing was a valid grown-up task which was also fun, focus shifted from self-criticism to self-fulfillment.

Sincere words of praise and encouragement fueled the students to concentrate more and more in their warm-ups. For example, in a warm-up called "Shape Change," students were asked to instantly transform their bodies into the shapes of other objects. They were informed that the goal was to develop the use of their bodies and their imaginations. Shapes included skyscrapers, apples, soup cans, laundry bags, stacks of newspaper, and eggs. The shapes were called out in random order, and as students transformed, they were instructed to do their own interpretations of the shapes. The teacher praised the group for having so many different versions of showing the same thing, and reminded them of a key concept in a creative classroom: any idea a student has is a valid idea, whether or not anyone else has it. The child can change it later or keep it the same, but with the class goal being expression, students are encouraged to perform in whatever way comes to mind.

It should be noted that when students suggested behavior which was potentially harmful to bodies or feelings, the teacher quickly reminded them of safety and/or sensitivity to others, and they responded by finding new and improved forms of expression. Sometimes the teacher also needed to request that a student change an idea so everyone would feel comfortable and safe in the class, while reassuring the student that she/he should also feel that way. On very few occasions students experienced difficulty in making this adjustment, as good judgment typically overcame impulsivity. During these times, which were early in the program, the children who could not support the group by acting safely and respectfully were asked to leave so that the rest of the class

could continue. After a few missed sessions, even these students showed a dramatic turnaround, lending their focus and thoughtful ideas to group performances.

WHAT WE DID

As the program continued into the school year, groups spent less time in warm-ups and more time focused on main activities. In Social Studies classes, students used the performing arts to learn about Viking exploration and New Jersey folklore. A variety of activities found in books of theatre games and creative drama were modified to meet curriculum requirements. The results were dramatic.

During a particularly successful portion of the Viking unit, the teacher came into the classroom playing the character "Snorgg Snorggelsson," a surly Viking who was in charge of teaching children of the village how to prepare for a nautical journey. With his furs and tunic hiding his tie and slacks, he led the class in a playfully gruff voice, "This is what I have to work with? A bunch of children? Well, *maybe* you'll do. Maybe."

The children giggled as he winked and continued, "Everyone's gotta learn sometime. Now, we are going on a sea voyage, and we need to get ready. You are my crew, and I will make sure you are prepared before we face the Great Sea." Children were then handed cards with typical jobs Vikings did when preparing for a journey. They were instructed to follow the steps on the cards to complete their tasks in pantomime.

After rehearsing in small groups, they would present their performance to the rest of the class. If the class could figure out what they were doing (with pointed clue-dropping from Snorgg), then that group was able to join the crew. Students pantomimed skills such as food-gathering and rope-making. The excitement which filled the classroom made the time fly by all too quickly. As the performers successfully completed their jobs, they were congratulated by Snorgg, who, using take-offs on their names, ad-libbed to students, "Well done, Raynor! Very good, Sammikin! Welcome aboard, Colinssen!"

While rehearsals had not been conducted unassisted, it took only a few bits of careful guidance by Snorgg to keep them moving forward, as the students were getting used to performing in groups. Four months later, they can still remember that Vikings fished with nets, smoked or salted their fish, collected honey in pots, and even made ropes from walrus-hide.

The Creative Writing classes also benefitted from this program. Students were led in improvisational games often used by comedy troupes and acting students, and were then asked to complete a writing assignment based on their performances. For several weeks, students wrote journal entries as other characters. These were then used to develop monologues and narrative pantomime scenes. This process prepared them for ensemble work.

As December approached, they elected to create performances for the school's Holiday Luncheon. Students were permitted to improvise their own pieces, including a version of *A Christmas Carol*. After rehearsals, they wrote about costume ideas, emotional journeys of their characters, and how they enjoyed the experience of performing. Because the experience was fun, it became fun to write about. They eventually performed these pieces at the luncheon, working well as a group of students who were proud of their ideas.

LOOKING AHEAD

This program will continue at the Newgrange School throughout the year. Students will continue to be invited to join their fellow classmates in an arena of playful excitement. Performances will be instructional, creative, and used often as springboards for further learning and topic discussion. Most importantly perhaps, they will help learning disabled children find academic and social success by using one of their greatest strengths—the ability to imagine and play. ■

Editor's Note: David Lightfoot is a teacher at the Newgrange School in Trenton, New Jersey.

47

REVEALING THE HOPES OF ADOLESCENTS THROUGH THE ART OF TATTOOS

BY MICHAEL GERRISH

THE NEWGRANGE METHOD

The Art and Technology programs at The Newgrange School help students internalize the content of other courses by providing project work designed to make connections among core study areas. *Revealing the Hopes of Adolescents through the Art of Tattoos* was designed as an extension of a project on communities and how they work, with special focus on how each individual fits into his or her community. Students from ages 14 to 17 participated, but the project is age adaptable and suitable as an enhancement for other curricula as well.

A TIME TO THINK

Because most adolescents have a keen interest in anything that is both fashionable to peers and objectionable to adults, many teens in our society have a favorable view of body piercing art and tattoos. Some teens engage in these activities to represent solidarity with an alternative lifestyle or attitude; others do so to express a sense of personal uniqueness. They can see that their actions challenge our expectations of them as kids. By departing from our culture's childhood norms, they show us that they are looking forward to a new status as adults.

Co-teacher David Young and I decided to use the idea of body art as an attention-capturing device to help students explore their past history, present interests, and personal goals through the media of painted PARISCRAFT casts. Our goal was to help students discover and internalize their interests and talents, thus fostering the understanding that they have an intrinsic value worth celebrating.

THE WAY THINGS WORK

The project began, as is our custom at Newgrange, with a preparatory discussion. Elements of the discussion included questions about each student's experience and ideas about tattoos and body piercing art. Students were shown photographs of people from various cultures whose bodies displayed visible tattoos and/or marks of scarification. Questions such as, "Do any of your friends have tattoos or body piercings?" led to inquiries between peers such as, "What do you think about the whole idea of body decoration? Are earrings and jewelry that different from nose or navel rings and colored ink tattoos?" We had definitely captured their interest!

Although few students would have thought to put their remarks into such terms, they were participating in a debate on a variety of issues relating to how adolescents are treated in our culture, and how they choose to express or deny their individuality to adults and to one another.

Dave and I then explained that each student would be making a cast of his or her arm with the idea that each would then use acrylic paints to "tattoo" a series of three images on the cast. The three images would be designed to show the past events, present interests, and future hopes of each creator. Designs could be realistic or abstract, as long as they complied with these guidelines.

FIRST YOU GET A BUCKET...

We then demonstrated how to make a PARISCRAFT cast. The person whose arm was being cast was given a latex glove to cover one hand. His forearm was then wrapped in plastic wrap from the wrist to just past the elbow. After deciding on how to pose the wrapped arm, our "castee" sat down and placed his arm over a tub filled with warm water. Dave and I cut strips of PARISCRAFT (plaster impregnated gauze) to size and, after wetting the PARISCRAFT strips one by one in the tub, we began to wrap the "castee's" arm.

We carefully overlapped wide strips on the upper forearm, building the cast to four layers. We avoided encasing the arm completely at the narrow wrist area to ease the cast's removal. Extra care was taken to preserve the cast's strength by overlapping the fingers and thumb in a crisscross pattern. As the PARISCRAFT strips were applied, we smoothed the surface of the cast so that it would more realistically resemble skin. When completed and smoothed, the cast was removed and set aside to dry.

After the demonstration, students were partnered up into teams of four. Each team member took part in all areas of cast-making. Some were more capable than others, and some teams had to repeat a cast or two, but at the end of the process, all were satisfied with the completed casts.

TONING UP

Students were given the option of painting the casts to match their skin tone or just priming the cast's surface. Most chose to duplicate their skin color. After a series of mini-lessons on color matching and dry versus wet brush techniques, they were off. Base skin tones, highlights, birthmarks, freckles, and even hair were painted on the casts. Our art room soon began to take on a macabre look as dozens of dismembered arms were lined up on the window sill to dry!

We instructed the class to use tempera paints for the skin/primer because its characteristic dull look resembled the natural sheen of skin. We reserved the bright and shiny acrylic paints for our tattoos. While the casts had been drying (first the plaster, then the tempera paint) our students had been busily sketching their designs on paper. We spurred them on with questions: What do tattoos reveal about the people who wear them? How do they tell a story? What symbols, shapes, or colors might help you tell your story better? Various presentation methods were discussed, including circles enclosing all three designs, a connecting triangle, and perhaps even a timeline format winding down or up the arm in serpentine splendor. They were really getting excited as their ideas began to coalesce.

Their faces and the faces of their fellow students eloquently expressed the idea that regardless of their level of artistic competence, the project had offered them a tangible method of acknowledging and revealing their hopes while enhancing their self-image

LET'S GO TO THE VIDEO TAPE!

To further promote discussion and comprehension, we brought in the media. David Lightfoot, an actor who teaches Social Studies at Newgrange, role played the part of a news reporter interviewing our students as they worked. We dressed Dave up in a reporter's trench coat and gave him a dummy microphone. With me playing the part of his trusty video man, Dave did a taped interview with each student about his or her cast.

The students reacted in a variety of ways. Some saw the taping as an intrusion, but most were thoughtful and attuned to the humor of the situation. In responding to his questions, students were able to practice giving answers to questions about their project. In effect, they modeled the skills and behaviors that they would need during the group's critique!

THE CRITIQUE

Every art project at Newgrange ends with a group critique. Each person is given time to introduce his or her project to the group. Information is presented in a structured way with students sharing how they feel about the project and its outcome, then talking about either what they would have done differently or how they problem-solved a troublesome situation. After each presentation, students listen to comments from classmates.

After 12 or so classes, the casts were ready to be unveiled. It seemed as if everyone wanted to address the group. The arms were placed in the center of the table around which we gathered. When a student rose to speak about his or her work, the class was attentive and respectful. They all knew that something important was happening. History was being told and private hopes and dreams were revealed for all to see.

Some students combined each life phase into one geometric emblem which featured separate faces for each time era. Musical instruments, logos, and favorite possessions adorned many casts. Other students connected their separate time zones thematically. A basketball dressed in a diaper bearing the birth year '78 dropped through a net and was transformed first into a yearbook and then into a pro-team jersey hanging from an arena rafter. A baby elephant's trunk, holding a rattle, changed into a computer cable and meandered past a computer terminal and the U.S. Capitol Building before terminating at a signet ring. It was all so wonderful!

THE FINAL ACT

We finished with a viewing of the videotape. Laughter and groans echoed in the room as we watched our amateur documentary. One student said, "Go away, I'm busy," and meant it. Another looked at his own cast as if for the first time and saw how marvelous it really was. Their faces and the faces of their fellow students eloquently expressed the idea that, regardless of their level of artistic competence, the project had offered them a tangible method of acknowledging and revealing their hopes while enhancing their self-image.

I will never forget the last video interview. One student had come to Newgrange with a severe reading problem and this third year would be her last year before returning to a district school. She held her cast up to the camera and explained her tattoo's design. She was a gifted artist, and her pictures were excellent as always. But this time, she included words in her design—words that she spelled and read alone with assurance and poise. When she was asked whether she liked her cast, she smiled and said, "Yes, it's a success. Yes!" ■

Editor's Note: Michael Gerrish is an instructor of Art and Technology at the Newgrange School in Trenton, New Jersey.

Best wishes to the National Center for Learning Disabilities

DDS Donovan Data Systems Inc

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

and Attribution for Success and Failure in LD Students

BY NICKI G. ARNOLD

PROFESSIONAL INSIGHTS

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS

In the 1960's, a group of researchers observed a phenomenon they called learned helplessness. In a controlled study, they used electric shocks when dogs tried to leave their cage. Later the dogs were provided a way out, but they made no effort to escape. Apparently, they had learned that they were helpless.

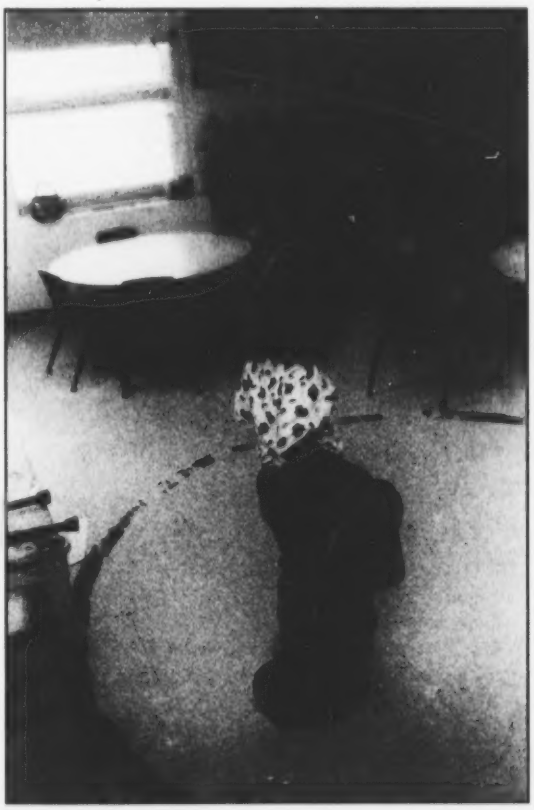
The fact that learning disabled children may become learned helpless in academic settings has been supported by numerous studies. Continual exposure to academic failure has been shown to contribute to learned

helplessness, withdrawal, unwillingness to approach new tasks, and a lack of persistence. Like the dogs in the study, they may apply this maladaptive behavior to new situations where they are capable of academic success, but think their efforts are useless.

Other factors have been shown to contribute to this learned academic helplessness. Grouping students with a variety of disabilities under the tutelage of one teacher with generic training, excessive use of external reinforcement, lack of early identification of learning disabilities, a belief in a fixed static intelligence, and a lack of reward for individual effort versus achievement are all important issues to consider.

THE THEORY OF ATTRIBUTION

Attribution Theory contains the underlying principles by which a person decides the causes of another person's behavior. These perceived causes can be dispositional and internal or situational and external. People often determine whether a behavior is dispositional or situational by using three key factors: consensus, consistency, and distinctiveness. Consensus refers to how most people act in a given situation. When consensus is low, behavior is attributed to dispositional or internal factors. When consensus is high, behavior is attributed to situational factors. Consistency refers to the degree to which people act in the same way on different occasions. Highly consistent behavior is attributed to dispositional factors. Distinctiveness refers to the extent to which people respond differently in different situations. If distinctiveness is low and people act similarly in different situations, behavior is attributed to dispositional factors. In general, if a behavior is unusual it is attributed to the situation. If it is not unusual, it is attributed to the disposition. While this may hold true in a laboratory, people in real life are subject to many variables, so assigning attribution to any one factor is impossible.



ATTRIBUTION FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND FAILURE

It has been suggested that learning disabled students tend to exhibit less motivation and persistence in academic tasks. One school of thought is that academic failure is based on difficulties in the regulation of locus, stability and controllability. Self-bias also appears to play an important part in this attribution model.

This model can easily be applied to children in school. The student who receives an "A" on a test may perceive himself to be bright and intelligent. The egocentric bias kicks in. He feels that he was more central than may have actually been the case and is likely to be motivated to work hard for that "A" the next time. The student who receives an "F" on a test, following the same thought process of his "A" counterpart, might assume that he was central to his failure and see himself as stupid, the consequence being a decrease in motivation to study for the next test. The "F" student might, however, say things like "the teacher was biased," "I was unlucky," or "I didn't study," in order to avoid making a dispositional attribute of "I'm stupid." He could then view his behavior as controllable and unstable, and be motivated for the next test.

ATTRIBUTIONS OF LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

Research has repeatedly shown that children with

learning disabilities make different attributions of success and failure than their normally achieving peers, and that these attributions may interfere with their classroom performance. Studies have suggested the following about academic achievement and self concept attributions of learning disabled students:

1. Students with learning disabilities are more likely to make external attributions for both success and failure than their non-disabled peers. Specifically, they are less likely to attribute success to ability or internal, controllable, and stable factors and are more likely to attribute success to luck or external, uncontrollable, and unstable factors.

2. Students with learning disabilities have lower global self concepts than non-disabled peers. This lowered self-concept was reported as early as grade three, and was found to remain stable through high school. Students with learning disabilities who were neither identified nor given special placement experienced lower academic self-concepts than those who were identified and specifically placed. Severely learning disabled students who received full-time special placement experienced increased academic self-concept, especially in reading.

Research has repeatedly shown that children with learning disabilities make different attributions of success and failure than their normally achieving peers and these attributions may interfere with their classroom performance

SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Students with learning disabilities must be placed in situations where it is possible to experience academic success. The fact that 60% of illiterate adults are learning disabled is evidence of our present failure to educate this population. Early intervention is critical. As stated by Yale University professor Dr. Sally Shaywitz at a 1994 conference sponsored by NCLD in Washington, DC, "We can identify by age five which children will have difficulty learning to read and we know which teaching methods are most successful." Reading ability was chosen as a criterion for learning disability because eighty-five to ninety percent of school aged children with learning disabilities manifest specific reading or language-based disabilities. It is also assumed that an inability to read would make academic success in other academic classes difficult if not impossible.

Mainstreaming students with learning disabilities does not improve self-concept, but appropriate special placement and support services increase self-concept. Most teachers are not qualified to teach learning disabled students. Therefore, these students should be grouped outside of the mainstream for academic classes where multisensory and proven teaching techniques can be used. Students should continue in these academic settings until their reading levels are commensurate with their intellectual potential, and attribution retraining should begin as soon as possible.

Students with learning disabilities should be taught how to set realistic goals, develop plans to achieve these goals, monitor self-behavior, and accept responsibility for goal directed activities. After specific attribution retraining, the attribution for success and failure of learning disabled students should not differ from that of their normally achieving peers.

CONCLUSION

Learning disabled students who are unable to achieve academic success can become learned helpless in academic situations. Attribution for academic success and failure can contribute to learned helplessness. If these attributions guide behavior, the attributions must be changed if behavior is to change. ■

Editor's Note: Nicki G. Arnold is a doctoral student in clinical psychology at the University of Hartford. She is also a member of the NCLD Board of Directors.

A STUDENT'S NEED FOR UNDERSTANDING

BY REGINA G. RICHARDS

Jimmy was a sixth grader who refused to write. His teachers felt he never paid attention, and his parents wondered if he had language processing problems. He was brought to my office for an evaluation. When I walked into the waiting room to first greet Jimmy, I saw a pre-teen youngster sitting with his head on his arms on a table. As I introduced myself, he lifted his eyebrows and mumbled, "Hi." After speaking with his mother for a few minutes, I invited him into my room. He chose a seat at the far end of an eight-foot table and maintained his head-down-on-arms posture throughout the session, even when answering my questions. When asked why he had come for the testing, he stated, "Mom made me. She thinks I'm a weirdo." When questioned further, he stated that he too felt that he was weird, "just because."

DEMYSTIFICATION

By this point, I knew that my initial goal was to develop a rapport with Jimmy, and I decided upon the strategy of demystification. Dr. Melvin Levine, in his book *Developmental Variation and Learning Disorders*, defines demystification as, "the process in which a child's plight is described so that it contains as little myth, fantasy, and mystery as possible. Weaknesses and strengths are described in concrete terms with as little use of technical terminology as possible. Demystification should help alleviate guilt, dispel fantasies, and minimize condemnation and accusation." As we spoke, I was careful to begin and end my discussions by emphasizing his positive attributes and including frequent references to his strengths.

JIMMY'S CHANGES

During our first session, when I needed to give Jimmy a paper, I would "shoot it" down the long table with my fingers and then ask him to "shoot it" back to me. On a one-word vocabulary test, Jimmy scored at the 96th percentile, which means he performed better than 96 out of 100 kids his age. I shared this with him, commenting that he was obviously a very bright young man.

I noted that Jimmy was quite wiggly through-

out the session. Although he generally kept his head on his arms, there was constant fidgeting of his legs and shifting of his body in his chair. Throughout the session, I validated his need to move in order to concentrate, and gave him permission to do so. I also offered him bubble gum to provide a focal movement, a strategy which helped him considerably.

At the second session, Jimmy made eye contact 50-75% of the time and I continued to comment upon his strengths as they appeared on academic tasks or in response to processing demands. I had some knowledge of his attentional difficulties from the intake that was completed with his mother, and as I observed his difficulties with concentration, attention, or distractibility, I tried to help him understand his behavioral patterns with such comments as, "It seems that it's easier for you to concentrate if you're wiggly or chewing gum, or playing with something in your fingers."

Many times teachers don't understand when kids need to move around to learn

At this point, I stated, "Many times teachers don't understand when kids need to move to learn. Did you ever have any teachers who may not have understood this?" He was amazed that I asked, and reported that he felt that most teachers did not understand him or his need to wiggle. As my goal was demystification, I explained that my purpose was twofold: to help him understand his processing style, and to help his parents and teachers better understand his needs. We also discussed appropriate strategies that he could use to simultaneously meet his needs and not annoy his teachers.

At the third session, Jimmy bounced into the testing room and chatted appropriately, using good conversational give-and-take and appropriate eye contact. He selected a chair directly across from my seat. During the session, he reported, "I'm here to help understand my attention deficit so that I can know what strategies to use and so that my teachers can understand me better." When I heard this statement, I was delighted to realize that the process of demystification was working its "magic."

At the last session, Jimmy's mother stated that he was very sad it was to be our last meeting, and that he hoped that we could have had more time together. I knew then that the process of demystification had indeed been successful, and I was reinforced in my belief that demystification is essential at all ages, but extremely critical in these crucial middle school years. Children with attentional issues need demystification much more frequently than do other children with learning differences.

THE RESULTS:

In Jimmy's case, the process of demystification helped him to understand that he was neither dumb nor weird. He learned that he was accountable for his own behavior, and that he did have control over some aspects of his learning.

The evaluation revealed that Jimmy has dyslexia, with particular problems in language processing, organization, and formulation. These, plus his major spelling difficulties, greatly interfere with his attempts to express his ideas in writing. A lengthy report was written describing his processing style, academic strengths and skill weaknesses, and copies were shared with his parents and teacher. I recommended that Jimmy receive both language therapy and educational therapy, and that demystification strategies be used to enable him to develop greater understanding and control of his attentional and organizational skills.

Jimmy's parents felt that a miracle had occurred, resulting in his change of attitude, but I knew it was no miracle. It was merely the logical and easy-to-use process of demystification. ■

Editor's Note: Regina G. Richards is Founder and Director of the Richards Educational Therapy Center, Inc. and Big Springs School in California. She is President of the Inland Empire Branch of the Orton Dyslexia Society.

DEFINING THE SELF AS A LEARNER FOR CHILDREN WITH LD

BY AUGUSTA H. GROSS, Ph.D.

INTRODUCTION

Much current research suggests that children with learning disabilities are likely to exhibit signs of depression, in particular, a sense of low self-worth. Research has not yet fully clarified the basis for the relationship between depressive symptomatology and learning disabilities. It does appear, though, that lowered self esteem is often an outcome of the children's erratic and thwarted attempts at learning and mastering academic skills. Children with learning disabilities experience frustration and episodic failure in learning activities. This kind of chronic disappointment can translate psychologically into a generalized sense of diminished value and potential, where children's inner sense of adequacy is seriously compromised.

FORMING A PSYCHOLOGICAL IDENTITY AS A LEARNER

The child defines himself as a learner through various means, including: (1) how he experiences himself at mastering skills and absorbing information; (2) how others see him and let him know about himself and, (3) how he compares himself to others in terms of mastering a new skill, (e.g. a sibling or peer may be reading while he is just learning the alphabet; the kid down the block is good at ball, while he can barely play "catch").

The development of a sense of self as a learner starts in very early childhood. Recent research has shown that children, prior to first grade, are already making distinctions about how competent they perceive themselves to be in different learning activities (including math, reading, playing a musical instrument, and sports activities). As they get older, they are increasingly adept at making distinctions about their abilities within broader domains. This is interesting because it strongly suggests that younger children are making generalizations about their learning ability even in areas they have not yet directly experienced. It also suggests that children's self perception of competence—and by extension—their self-concept as learners, are already becoming formed at a young age.

A child with widely uneven cognitive functioning could become overwhelmed and decide that he's a bad learner and 'why bother!' In such a case, the child's internal view of himself as a learner can result in crippling feelings of hopelessness and failure.

All these experiences, impressions and communications become aspects of the child's self-concept as a learner. The child's attitudes, motivation, and initiative in learning situations derive in part from the child's early interactions with others, especially from parents, teachers, and family. These reactions and interactions become internalized and serve as the basis for the child's own sense of value as a learner, and for his attitude and openness to learning.

Learner identity issues for children with learning disabilities are quite complicated. These children often display inconsistent patterns of abilities that result in learning experiences marked by unpredictability and uncertainty. Imagine some of the dilemmas which these children face:

- What's wrong with me that I know something one minute and not the next?
- Why do I sometimes feel dumb and sometimes smart?
- Why am I fast at learning some things and slow at learning other things?
- How could I possibly overcome this problem and learn better if I am learning disabled?
- How could I be smart if I miss the simplest things like remembering words or names?
- Why can I read something one time and not be able to read it the next time?
- If I'm disabled, doesn't that mean I can't do it?
- Why is it that I know all about football statistics but I can't seem to do simple math?

These are real dilemmas that undermine children's ability to make sense of and integrate a consistent self-definition as a learner. Children with learning difficulties have to override these periodic experiences of failure and frustration and develop more positive self images.

Young children tend to embrace a simplistic view of themselves as being either good or bad and, in so doing, are at risk for developing a distorted view of themselves as "poor" learners, especially if they have learning disabilities. Such global self-stereotyping can unhappily persist into adulthood, and can negate their positive traits, reaping little if any benefit from what are often superior abilities.

Children who internalize a sense of being slow or poor learners are at considerable risk for failure. Lowered expectations have been shown to have a negative impact on how well children actually learn, and even on how willing they are to attempt tasks. Children with learning disabilities are vulnerable to paralyzing self-doubt, and often avoid learning in order to withdraw from further failure.

The literature on learned helplessness is filled with examples of how children try to reduce their sense of failure and to avoid further experiences of incompetence. Labels such as "slow," "stupid," "lazy," and "dumb," can have a devastating impact on motivation, curiosity, and confidence and are unfortunately all too frequently heard during the impressionable early school years.

THE IMPACT OF PARENT-TEACHER INTERACTIONS

The feedback others provide in early schooling and at home influences the child's view of himself as a learner. Feedback may be given for learning and mastering new skills (learning new words, using a potty, tying shoes) and may be forthcoming as verbal praise, a non-verbal gesture or smile, or a combination of sound, sight, and touch. Serving as highly charged messages, feedback can profoundly influence the child's sense of self-competence.

Recent research has confirmed that for learning disabled children, parents' positive perceptions are strongly related to children's own self-perceptions, and in turn, to their academic success. As children with learning problems are often unsure about their abilities, they are vulnerable to being swayed by others' perceptions of their abilities. Parents may, at times, unwittingly communicate their own frustrations and doubts, and are likely to react when learning disabled children evoke in them a feeling of failure or a reminder of something they themselves may have experienced.

One parent of a child with significant sequencing and organizational difficulties commented about his daughter's school report by saying with irritation, "She wasn't supposed to turn out like me!" This parent had academic difficulties himself and strongly identified with his child's problems, recalling his own sense of injury and failure. He therefore had difficulty giving his child the reassurance and support she needed, and acknowledging that she could be helped through remediation. Fortunately, with time, this parent began to accept his learning problems as well as those of his child, and succeeded in getting her the help she needed.

Parents who have experienced learning difficulties can offer empathy to their children who have learning problems in ways that can be uniquely validating and supportive. These parents have a key advantage in knowing firsthand the discouragement and frustration of living with learning disabilities. Parents' sensitivity can be invaluable in giving children the sense of being both accepted and understood.

The following is one clinical illustration in which a child with a learning disability grapples with identity issues related to his internal view of himself as a learner:

Jack was a 12-year-old boy, referred for reported depression. He was found to have strong verbal skills and mild visual-spatial learning problems and was struggling in school. Early in the course of therapy, he stated that he did not like the term "learning disabilities." Jack looked at the various books in my office having to do with learning disabilities. "Why don't they just call it trouble with learning certain things?" he asked vehemently. "That way you don't make it seem like it's such a big handicap!" Over a short period of time, this youngster became more willing to acknowledge his "trouble" with learning math, and agreed to get remediation.

Once he could talk about his feelings about being labeled, it was possible to talk realistically about his learning problems. Once Jack was able to find a way to think of himself as "a good learner with trouble in math," he was more willing to accept help. For Jack, the meaning of the label "learning disabled" had felt overwhelming.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As part of a child's psychological development, there appears to be a mandate to create a coherent self-concept as a learner. It becomes easy to see why a child with learning disabilities can become confused and discouraged. A child with learning disabilities has to assimilate contradictory information about himself as a learner; e.g., "I'm good at designing models, but I'm slow in reading." It is easy to see how a child with widely uneven cognitive functioning could become overwhelmed and decide that he's a bad learner and "why bother!" In such a case, the child's internal view of himself as a learner can result in crippling feelings of hopelessness and failure.

One of the biggest psychological challenges for such a child is to develop an accurate self-concept as a learner which takes into account both positive and negative learning experiences. How well a child succeeds at this complicated task depends to a large extent on sustained support and feedback from others early on as well as an ability to integrate what he understands about himself in various learning situations.

A good student may develop efficient and automatic academic skills, yet may be unexplorative or lackadaisical about the learning process itself. A good learner is one who shows willingness to approach problems and an ability to sustain motivation in spite of frustration. These psychological characteristics are frequently exhibited in learning disabled children who have to work doubly hard to compensate for their difficulties in mastering certain academic skills. If the learner is valued as a whole, a very different and broader view of the child's ability and approach to learning is developed. That can, in turn, directly affect the child's self-concept as a learner and can help focus on the real, positive learner attributes. Descriptive words that come to mind are "enthusiastic," "motivated," "alert," "curious," "spirited," "persevering," and "inquiring." These are characteristics that can be identified and fostered through the use of verbal labeling and/or visual and verbal analogies that highlight their meaning and value.

One eight-year-old with learning disabilities latched on to a phrase that the therapist said to her as a way of validating her efforts. "I see you like to work on something until you get it!" She later repeated the sentiment, "I don't give up until I'm finished!" She had incorporated the verbal feedback to urge herself on in a positive way.

Children with learning problems need help in designing broad and generous self-definitions as learners which contain disparate and often contradictory elements. Children need ongoing help to know about themselves as learners across different settings and tasks. Providing ongoing support and consistent feedback become crucial factors in helping children develop and sustain positive learner identities. ■

Editor's Note: Augusta Gross, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist affiliated with the Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy in New York City. She works with adults and children with learning disabilities.

WE SALUTE
THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR
LEARNING DISABILITIES

The New York Marriott Marquis
isn't close to Broadway
or just around the corner.
It's **on** Broadway—in the heart of the theater district,
right on the center aisle.

BROADWAY, CENTER AISLE.

NEW YORK Marriott MARQUIS

1535 Broadway, New York City, New York 10036 (212) 398-1900

PEPSICO INC.

salutes the NCLD
for its exemplary work
on behalf of children

PEPSI
Pizza Hut
Frito Lay
KFC
TACO BELL

Learning Disabilities are nothing new... understanding them is.

Compliments of
Ann and Herb Siegel
BHC Communications, Inc.

MY STORY

BY MATT REHRING

LD EXPERIENCE: YOUTH

When I was very young and beginning my school years, there were several events that occurred that I now realize had a tremendous impact on who I am today. As early as preschool, I can remember having difficulty learning. My teachers and my parents came to the conclusion that I should be tested for learning disabilities. After lots of tests, I was diagnosed with some learning disabilities and developmental delays. What I remember most is when they would put me in a net swing and they would swing me around and play "Superman." I also got to play on the trampoline and got to climb around a lot. It was so much fun that I never realized it was therapeutic. I also got to do some thinking activities and memorization games.

Eventually I started elementary school but attended one with a different style than the traditional school. Springer School was very much like a normal school except it was a school for children like myself with learning disabilities. At Springer School, I felt like I belonged because children there had the same problems I had, so there was nothing to hide from. Each problem I faced in the classroom, however, brought intense frustration because I was slow and easily angered. Sometimes I was so frustrated that I knocked my desk over and yelled at my teachers. Even with all that, I made many new friends.

At Springer, I learned to cope with my learning disability. The educators helped me realize I needed to turn my disability into a different way of learning. While at Springer, they made me learn more about my disability and created a positive atmosphere for me. I learned a positive outlook on life and not to use my disability as a crutch.

While there, I found that I was able to do something that I never thought I could. I was able to turn my disability into a gift. By developing organizational skills and becoming a better person, I was able to learn easier and be a nice person without my previous frustration. Some of the ways Springer helped me was through speech class. With a speech therapist, I learned to develop more effective communication skills. There were other professionals, such as the school psychologist, who helped me develop better coping skills to channel my frustrations. Springer also continued my motor skill training. At times it was frustrating for me, other times it was a little bit easier to learn.

Now that I am in high school, I realize how important it was for me to have early intervention to deal with my special way of learning. I know I ask A LOT of questions, not to annoy but to clarify for me. It is hard to explain to someone who learns in a more traditional way what a learning disability is. The easiest way for me to explain my learning traits is that I have tremendous memorization and visual memory. My weaknesses are in auditory memory and problem solving. For example, another student may learn a skill with the first try; with me it may take several attempts before I grasp a skill. I am not stupid, incompetent, or dumb. I am just me, and I think I am OK. I have learned to believe in myself, something my parents always did. My parents told me that God put me on this earth for a very good reason. ■

Editor's Note: Matt Rehring wrote this autobiographical essay as a junior high school student in Pennsylvania.

ON THE ROAD TO COLLEGE

BY MIMI COOPER

IT HAD TO BE DONE

How could I make a decision that could change almost everything about me? All kinds of questions were running through my mind. Would I get the help that I needed? Will I keep my old friends? Will I make new friends? But the most important question was: Will I be happy? At this point, I would do anything to be happy again. It wasn't entirely my decision, but it had to be done.

MY FIRST DAY AT SPRINGER

Well, January was getting closer and I was getting ready for my first day at Springer School. Springer School is a small, private school in Cincinnati, Ohio. They focus on children with learning disabilities. I would be entering as a second semester seventh grader. I was scared and very nervous to take those first steps into a new atmosphere and unfamiliar surroundings. I knew to think positively because I would be getting the help that I so desperately needed.

The students who attend Springer are all in special need of attention. Because of this, each class has only twelve students. There are two teachers for each twelve students which means there is always someone around to lend a helping hand. I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to attend such a wonderful and caring school.

At Springer there was never any pressure to answer questions that were asked by the teachers. I remember that at my other school, I was always a nervous wreck about class participation, even if I did know the answer. I think this attitude of mine was because of an experience I had in sixth grade. I recall I was in History class and my teachers had just asked who were the senators from Ohio. I raised my hand thinking, "Wow, I know this." As you can obviously assume, my answer was incorrect. The entire class burst out laughing. From that day forward, I promised myself never to participate in class again.

This type of situation would never take place at Springer. The students are taught very good values and no one was ever allowed to make fun of another student for any reason.

During the winter break before my first day of school, I went through a lot of testing with the school's psychiatrist. Basically, they were testing my "Intelligent Quotient." To some outsiders, Springer was known as "the dumb person's school." What an insult! What others didn't know was that to get into Springer you had to have an average IQ.

As the next couple of months passed at Springer, my friends at my old school seemed to have disappeared. My first conclusion was that they were embarrassed to know me. Now I think I

could have been the one "ditching" them. I just assumed that they didn't want to be with me. I began feeling sorry for myself. During this time I became even more depressed. I hid my feelings and would not talk to anyone about anything.

DIFFICULT EMOTIONS

My bad feelings built up so much inside that I decided, with reinforcement from my mother, that I should talk to someone. So for about a half-an-hour once a week, I spent my class time with Springer's school psychiatrist. We would talk about my problems with my family life, my relationships with friends, bad grades in class or anything at all that seemed to be bothering me at the time.

I soon realized that I had almost no self-esteem. I blamed myself for any arguments that would occur at home, asking, "Why am I such a hindrance in their life?" I also had no confidence and put myself down in every area of my life. I even decided that I could not play soccer anymore, even though I knew that I was a strong player.

I refused to let my parents help. I regret that now because I know how much they were hurting inside to help me. I always told myself that they weren't trying hard enough. However, they were the ones who gave me the opportunity and insisted that I go to Springer. They were the ones who pushed me to continue soccer just as I was giving up. As I look back, my parents did everything they could to help me.

A TURN FOR THE BETTER

My problems weren't solved overnight, but slowly I was happy with the way things were going. I was confident to talk about Springer and the help I was receiving there.

My parents and the faculty at Springer had such an influence on me. I will always remember them. The faculty pushed me to do things I would never had thought of doing. They once asked me to write a paragraph about leadership, and soon after I was voted President of the entire school. I was so nervous at the thought of speaking in front of a group of people, but my principal at the time encouraged me not to give up, which is what I had been doing quite frequently.

Those two-and-one-half years went by so quickly. I cried just as much when I graduated as I had upon entering.

BACK AT MY OLD SCHOOL

The first few weeks back at my old school were quite tough. I had to make a huge transition from a very caring, small private school to a much larger high school. For a while, I felt that I had made a huge mistake going back there. All of those old memories returned. Then I noticed a difference in me, my attitude, and in my ability to handle situations. I realized how Springer had taught me to feel good about myself; how they had taught me to handle my academic work; how they had made me feel so important; and how they had given me the confidence in myself to now deal with a large high school which really doesn't care much about their students.

I am now not afraid to ask for help anymore

I still keep in touch with the faculty and my friends at Springer. I've gone back to speak to kids who are planning on graduating from Springer. I told them the best thing that I did was to get involved with my school—sports, any and all extra curricular activities. I told them never to fall behind and to ask for the help, and not to give up.

LOOKING AHEAD

I'm now a senior, and I'm looking forward to making another huge step towards college. I feel that I will be fine and that I've accomplished many things. I am now not afraid to ask for help anymore. I know that teachers are always willing to help if you simply let them know you are interested and you care.

Who knows, maybe someday I will return to Springer and help teach other children like myself. I do know that whatever I decide to do with my life, my successes will be largely due to my two-and-one-half years at Springer. ■

Editor's Note: Mimi Cooper is a student at Butler University.

photograph © Abraham Menashe

Helping All of Us To Reach Higher

SALUTE

THE NEW YORK TIMES SALUTES
THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES

LABELS

BY RYAN FOSHAY HANSON

Retard, loser, bum, druggie, are only a few of the cruel yet very commonly used labels that we are used to hearing every single day. They are all derogatory, hurtful examples of labels that nobody can do anything about. The biggest problem with labels is that there are so many and we all have our own. Look around, do you know the label that the people around you go by? What label do you go by? In this speech I'm going to tell you about my labels.

I have dyslexia. Simply put, it means that I have a learning style difference. Dyslexia comes from the Greek, meaning "difficulty with words or language." Basically, it means that my brain cells may be arranged differently from those who are not dyslexic. When I was little and looked at the letter b, I sometimes saw the letter d. Differences like that made learning to read difficult. It is estimated that dyslexia affects at least one child in ten. Yet, my mother had to explain dyslexia to many of my classroom teachers. She would give them books and articles to read, films to watch, etc., in an effort to educate them to some understanding of what dyslexics go through in their daily lives. My parents wanted my labeling changed from "troublemaker" to someone with a "learning style difference"—quite an uphill battle, considering my age and unwillingness to accept my problem. In the beginning, the whole situation made me angry and frustrated.

I REALLY LOOKED FORWARD TO SCHOOL

I went to a neighborhood elementary school. It was a small school and everyone knew everyone else. I really looked forward to school. I wanted to go off to school every day carrying my Super Heroes lunch box just like my big brother did and bring home lots of starred papers to decorate my mom's refrigerator.

However, the fun didn't last all that long. I had my first major blow-out in kindergarten with my teacher. She sent me to the principal who kept me in for three recesses. I was punished because I refused to make a man out of popsicle sticks, something we had been doing for weeks! At the innocent and naive age of five I was labeled "difficult and disruptive." The truth of the matter was that I had watched a segment of the evening news on television shortly before the incident. The news was full of a story about going on strike and refusing to work. I thought it sounded like a reasonable idea so I decided to try a strike myself. It was merely an experiment but it started the process of people labeling me.

My lunch pail that was once shiny and new was soon full of dents from banging it off the skulls of my classmates during the after school fights in the park. One day, shortly after the classroom had been freshly painted, I flung a plastic container of ketchup to my friend during a lunch period. It hit the newly painted wall, the top flew off on impact and red juicy ketchup ran all down the

wall. It was this incident that threw me into the realm of the troublemaker in that class.

In the fourth grade I was a terrible problem for my teacher and the entire school administration. Nobody knew what to do with me. Up to that point, I had gotten very little out of school and spent much of my time propelling noises from the bathroom all the way into the classroom in order to disturb the whole class. That was the year my parents took me to the Children's Hospital in Boston for a battery of tests to try to determine why I was different from the other kids. The diagnosis was that I had dyslexia. Now the labeling really got heavy. To some I had gone from being the hyperactive kid to the hyperactive dyslexic. More labels!

One day, a teacher on recess duty who felt a bunch of us were playing too rough grabbed me and commanded me to "stay right here," pointing to the spot directly toward the ground beside him. I quickly followed his command and froze in place. He then proceeded to walk around the playground as was his duty. When he looked around and saw that I was not beside him and that I had not moved, he immediately decided that I was being disrespectful, disobedient and challenging. I, on the other hand, thought I was doing exactly what he had told me to do. He came charging at me, grabbed me around the neck and choked me. While tightening his hold on my neck he flung his finger in my face and screamed at me.

Remember, I was only nine years old and trying to deal with an adult who was misjudging my intent. His intent, of course, was to have me stay by his side and follow him around the playground. I, as many dyslexic children do, had taken his words literally and stayed in that spot. I believe, in addition to being uneducated about learning disabilities, he acted upon my reputation, the labeling thing again. This was a bias that was used against me for a long time.

Remember, if being the class clown makes our fellow classmates laugh, then the attention is on his comedy performance, not on his insufficient academic performance. Wouldn't you agree that being labeled 'class clown' is better than being labeled 'class dummy'?

GAINING PERSPECTIVE

I could write a book about the unfair labels that have been placed on me and that we place on one another—I am as guilty as the next person, even though I try so hard not to be. Now that I'm older and at least a bit wiser, I can look back and realize that I was indeed a problem for my teachers. I not only had difficulty with reading, writing, and spelling, but I also had difficulty remembering to follow instructions.

Most, along the way, have used labels like those I have mentioned and other labels like "troublemaker," "class clown," "lazy," etc. Negative labels. The sad fact is that every one of us needs to be accepted at some level. If we can't get one kind of recognition we often, especially when we are young, sink to whatever level necessary to get peer attention. I always hated the troublemaker and class clown labels. However, all the kids were laughing and I felt as though, for the first time, I was finally getting acceptance in school. So, despite the teachers' and my parents' anger, I continued the comedy routine. Making my teachers crazy with jokes and funny noises was worth incurring their wrath because the kids were laughing. I was, at least, being socially accepted which gave me my only reason to look forward to school each day. Remember, if being the class clown makes our fellow classmates laugh, then the attention is on his comedy performance, not on his insufficient academic performance. Wouldn't you agree that being labeled "class clown" is better than being labeled "class dummy"?

Fortunately, along the way I have been blessed with some very special teachers. I had a Speech and Language teacher who started working with me in the third grade. In my eight-year-old mind, she was a savior. She totally understood me and my learning style. She made learning easier for me and I love her for it. She let me cry when I

was devastated over something that happened in class; she let me yell when I was frustrated. To this day, she remains a very close friend of mine and we spend quite a lot of time together. It's pretty rewarding really, because now I am finding that I can help her out once in a while and that makes me feel great!

MY SINCERE THANKS

To the teachers who have taken the time to pore through my 50-lb. file that I have accumulated over the past twelve years and to listen to me and take me seriously, you have my sincere thanks. My 50-pounder contains at least a few pounds of detention slips and notes from teachers expressing that I was a difficult student to deal with. I appreciate the extra patience they took to teach a child rather than simply stick to the "labeling" when it would have been the easier path.

Until I developed some semblance of maturity, I had decided that I would never find anything other than social success in school. But, there have been other special gifted professionals along my educational path who have changed that mind set—dedicated teachers who have looked beyond the labels and, rather than condemning the behavior, tried to find an explanation for it. One of them, Mr. K., would repeatedly encourage me if he thought I was getting discouraged. Then, of course, there was Mr. M. who made me believe in my own potential and that I was capable of success. And Mrs. F. who motivated me to spend more time enhancing my strengths instead of dwelling on my weaknesses.

I have been proud to have called these people my teachers, and North Yarmouth Academy should be proud to have such dedicated faculty members as these. They and others have been particularly responsible for the fading away of the "troublemaker" image and helping me believe in my academic ability enough to create the "good citizen," "serious student" label. These are labels that I find much easier to live with.

I know firsthand that being labeled dyslexic isn't a day at the park, but I'm not alone. I was diagnosed when I was eight years old. Unfortunately, several kids I see each day are dyslexic, too. The problem is that nobody knows it. My heart goes out to those people. They sit in class and listen to a teacher who might as well be speaking a foreign language they don't understand. They don't have a clue about the material presented, nor do they care. Because, you see, most of them have never felt the feeling of getting a good grade or gotten a pat on the back for an assignment well done. And, without any of that positive motivation, which I feel should be the backbone of any education, those kids just decide not to try, and sink to whatever level they need to find comfort. When everyone around them appears to know what is going on and what is happening, they are always a step behind the eight ball. It does not, however, mean that they are not intelligent—not at all. It simply means that it may take them a second longer than the next or it may take two blinks instead of one.

Sure, I'm dyslexic, but I'm lucky. I am learning that I have many strengths. True, you won't see me standing up receiving an academic award during school period and I don't expect to write the great American novel. I try not to worry about that, but focus on the individual talents that I realize I have. To my family and the special teachers who have helped me in so many different ways, I want you to know you have made a difference in my life and I'm grateful.

The good news is that people generally, and specifically teachers, are becoming more aware of dyslexia. There have been a lot of very successful dyslexics through history. Some of them are Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci, Thomas Edison, President Woodrow Wilson, and General George Patton, to name a few. I bet each one of these bright, talented dyslexics must have had at least one dedicated, understanding teacher in their lives, a teacher who looked beyond labels and saw the good character and intellect that lies within us all. ■

Editor's Note: Ryan Hanson is a student at Curry College in Milton, Massachusetts. This article is adapted from a speech he delivered to his graduating high school class.

WE APPRECIATE WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE A NAME FOR YOURSELF.

Brian Bregmon

Matt A. Ashley

Charlene Eichenhorn

Katie Wattles

Emily A Pond

Greg Simon

Matthew Amacher

Robert Pereira

mike Black

Richard Eldridge

Troy Bunge

Don Topping

Becky Voigt

Phil Sepas

Tommy Knowles

Freddie Robinson

Caiti Shea

Matt Lauer

Judi Walters

mike Lubley

The signatures above are those of students graduating from Eton Academy in Birmingham, Michigan. Eton Academy is the only accredited independent school for children with learning disabilities in the state of Michigan.

For young people with a learning disability like dyslexia, the seemingly simple task of writing their own name is a serious challenge. Imagine the difficulty of learning to read, let alone write, when the letters you see are switched!

That's why Ford Motor Company supports the National Center for Learning Disabilities, whose efforts allow schools like Eton Academy to offer young people with special needs the very best education and support. This effort makes it possible for students to learn the skills they need to write their names today, and to make a name for themselves tomorrow.

Jackie Stewart is an outstanding example. A three-time world champion race car driver, consultant to Ford Motor Company and a leading supporter of the National Center for Learning Disabilities, Jackie overcame his own learning disability to make a name for himself in both racing and business.

FACING FACTS

BY KATE EKLUND

The thing that makes learning disabilities such a hard thing to have is that they're as different as the people who have them. So, there's no set of rules to live by, no manual so that if you just follow it, everything will come together.

Possibly even harder is that you know that your learning disabilities are never going to go away. When you have the flu, or an ear infection, you know that you will eventually get better. But, when you have a learning disability, you don't even have anything to look forward to.

I guess you already know that, though. So, I guess it would be a drag to have to hear about it all again. As my story unfolds differently than most learning disability cases, it would probably be more interesting to hear about than it is to hear about the trials of a person with learning disabilities.

It began when I went to visit my grandmother for the Fourth of July, at age ten. Things blur together for the next several days. All I know is that a man in diabetic shock was driving the wrong way down a four lane highway and hit my car head on. I know that my grandmother died, my mom broke her arm and leg, and I broke my skull and suffered a severe brain injury.

Coming out of it, I seemed like the luckiest

person in the world; I was alive. Most even called it a miracle. And, I guess that was lucky. It's just that things were suddenly so hard for me.

Over the next few months, I got a little bit better. Now it's been more than a year and a half since I've improved at all, and I've just come to the realization that this is as good as it's going to get. I had the techniques, the accommodations, but things were still so hard. In most learning disability cases, people are born with their disabilities. Their learning disabilities have always been a major part of who they are.

I, on the other, had lived ten perfectly happy years without my disabilities.

I soon came to the harsh realization that my learning disabilities weren't going to die. So, the next step was learning to cope. All the tips, techniques, and study ideas came forth. I became fairly comfortable with my learning disabilities. You could even say I was proud. I was able to deal with such a hard thing, and the fact that I could overcome them made me feel really good about myself.

Soon my learning disabilities became more than something I dealt with. They became something I talked about, wrote about, dreamt about, thought about. They became me. For a long while, this was a good thing, at least I thought it was a good thing.

It's not that I was ashamed to be learning disabled, it's just that I wanted to be known for more

The problem is, when you're known for only one part of yourself, the rest of you is pushed aside. At school there was the pretty girl, the popular girl, the smart girl, the artistic girl, and me, the learning disabled girl. Though I was, and still am, proud of myself, learning disabilities included, I wanted to be known as more than, "That girl who has learning disabilities."

So, there came a time when I simply needed to be me. Well, not the me I am now, the me I was when I was ten years old, the me before I had learning disabilities, before I was ever in my car accident. So, I tried to push my learning disabilities aside. But then there was school, and teachers, and the fact that if I didn't fight for my accommodations, my adult life would be spent saying, "Welcome to McDonald's, how may I help you?"

This all meant that my learning disabilities were going to affect me for the rest of my life. No one knew that I was interested in community service, that I liked to write, play tennis, and read. No one even cared. All they knew was that I had been in a car accident, and now had learning disabilities. I realize that this was partially my own fault for being so public with my disabilities, and nothing else, in the first place, but regardless of the reason, the results were the same.

It's not that I was ashamed to be learning disabled, it's just that I wanted to be known for more. And so, I decided to get involved with new people—people who could know me for my interests before they knew me for my learning disabilities.

That's why I got involved in community service. I'm now on a government run, statewide volunteerism promoting organization made up of 15 kids from all over Michigan, consisting of people between the ages of 12 and 21. The experience has been very rewarding for me.

I also became more involved in tennis. That way I got to know a lot of people who had never known about my car accident. The point was for me to be able to meet people who knew me for my interests and accomplishments, and not for my learning disabilities.

The key to becoming comfortable as a learning disabled individual is realizing that you're more than just a learning disabled individual. I am very proud of my community service, school, writing, and of my learning disabilities. And because I now spend time with people who have gotten to know me before they've gotten to know my learning disabilities, I am no longer, "that girl with the learning disabilities." And for me, that's a good thing. ■

Editor's Note: Kate Eklund is twelve years old and lives with her family in Michigan.

THE EFFECTS OF LEARNING DISABILITY ON ONE'S LIFE

BY ANONYMOUS

LD EXPERIENCE: ADULT

When I entered Kindergarten in the late nineteen forties, no one ever heard of a child having a learning disability. My parents and my teachers never noticed I had a problem learning until I entered third grade. This is when my life changed. I was made to feel different from my classmates. When I did written work in class, or if I had to read aloud, I always got a very negative reaction from my teacher. The other children in the class always heard the teachers' harsh words used towards me when I didn't know an answer, or if I couldn't read as well as the other children did. These remarks caused my classmates to feel I was stupid. As time passed I began to feel very inferior. I

became a very shy and withdrawn child in school.

When I entered junior high school, I found the teachers' attitudes towards me were a lot nicer. In junior high we had departmental (different teachers for every subject, with students moving from room to room), and I had a variety of teachers. Nasty remarks by the teachers were not prevalent, but a lot of the boys and girls from my elementary school entered junior high with me and their feelings towards me still prevailed.

For many years I felt inadequate when it came to learning, even though I taught both my daughters how to read before they entered school.

DISCOVERY

About two years ago, I was alone in my house working in my kitchen and listening to "WINS all news all the time" on the radio. I heard the commentator mention, if you or your child have a learning disability or know someone who has trouble learning, help is available. He mentioned a phone number to call for more information. I didn't know exactly what was wrong, but I knew I had trouble learning. When I called they informed me there were a number of learning disability centers, but the center closest to me was at Mount Sinai Hospital. I was given the phone number of Mount Sinai Learning Disability Center, and given the name of the director there.

Children should not be made to feel inferior because they lack the ability to learn in a regular classroom setting

This is when my life began to change. I was interviewed by a social worker. I was told that I probably had a learning disability, but I had to be tested by a learning specialist. The results of the tests showed I'm unable to absorb a lot of information at one time. Then I was able to understand why I had difficulty learning in a class with 30 children.

I now see a teacher once a week who is a learning disability specialist. With the efforts of my teacher I found I have the ability to learn at a faster pace than I thought was ever possible.

With the help of the social worker I am able to look at myself in a more positive way. Even though I have a problem learning, I graduated from high school and made a lot of positive strides in my life. All these years I hid the fact I have difficulty learning. It's hard for me to tell friends, since I'm afraid they will think less of me. When I come for my weekly visit, I enter a small room where my tutor teaches. If there is a child in the room who she is just ending a lesson with, she is polite and introduces me. I feel embarrassed. I'm an adult in the same situation as a child. Then I think to myself, she is not making these remarks to hurt my feelings. I realize I'm feeling this way because of all the negative reactions I've heard and experienced. I'm still very sensitive, because of what I had to endure in the past.

LOOKING FORWARD

I'm looking forward to bettering my life through learning and finding ways to overcome my negative feelings. I've learned so much about myself and about learning disabilities by coming to this center. I was told I'm not alone, this problem is prevalent in a lot of adults today. Like me, as a child they couldn't learn in a regular classroom environment.

I'm grateful for the kindness and respect that is shown towards me at this learning disability center.

I'm glad that educators and parents are aware of this problem today. Every effort should be made to help a child, when they are in distress while learning. Children should not be made to feel inferior because they lack the ability to learn in a regular classroom setting.

I've learned that as an assistant nursery school teacher there are many ways to give positive reinforcement. Children should be made to see themselves in a positive way by their teachers. Then they will want to learn and be able to work to their full capacity. I think at times teachers don't realize how much of an influence they have on their students' lives. ■

Now that's what we call a perfect fit.

From health organizations to senior programs to children's groups and more, the Detroit Lions and community charities fit together perfectly, working side by side toward the common goal of building a better community.

THE DETROIT LIONS

DETROIT LIONS CHARITIES
The Community's Pride of the Lions

READING MY WAY

BY FRANCES BYFIELD PITTS

Reading has always been a puzzle to me. I learned early that if I re-read a story, I would find different things in it each time, things I had missed before. I didn't understand it, but I thought it was the same for everyone. I had been in the top reading groups in first and second grades, so the trouble I had in the fourth grade speed-reading test came as quite a shock.

I still remember going into class that day and Mrs. C, our teacher, said we were to have a speed-reading test. She passed out folders and said we were not to open them until she told us to. Then we were to take out the booklet and read as fast as we could, but not so fast that we didn't remember or understand what we were reading. By no means were we to go back to re-read anything. When we finished reading we were to stand up quietly beside our desks so as not to disturb the people who were still reading. I sat up straight in happy anticipation of this fun game. When everything was set, Mrs. C gave the signal, and we all opened our folders and began to read.

SPEED-READING TEST

I started reading in my usual fashion. I read the first sentence and then went back to the beginning to check the facts, because the first time I read something, I didn't always read the right words. Like if I read, "The Russians are com-

ing," I quickly re-read it, because it might really say, "The Russians are NOT coming." So I had to re-read everything.

But then I remembered Mrs. C. had told us not to re-read anything. So I read slower. As I was reading, I remembered this was a speed test and I must hurry, so I tried to speed up. "Hurry! Hurry!" I told myself. "You must be way behind!"

TRYING TO READ FAST

If I hurried fast enough, I might catch up. When I had read two paragraphs, I realized I had been hurrying so fast I didn't know what I had read. I was disgusted with myself. I started over again. Opening my eyes wider, scrutinizing each word as I forced every letter into better focus, hoping I wouldn't skip any words or read wrong words. But it didn't work; I couldn't remember what I read if I didn't re-read. I became frustrated. How does she expect me to read fast and still know what I'm reading? I can't do both at the same time. She must be stupid if she doesn't know that. But I kept trying.

If I don't have the facts and the answers organized in my mind, everything I've read just wanders around up there, and I can't always find it later. Sometimes when my mind doesn't tell me things right away, I think I don't know them. But then, later, I remember.

TRYING TO REMEMBER

The story was full of details like: Mary had a blue ribbon in her hair, brown shoes with silver buckles on her feet, and wore a yellow dress. I couldn't remember that many things at one time. I needed more time to picture it all in my mind and then (as I called it) "stamp it in my brain." If I didn't have time to do that, I wouldn't remember, and even if I remembered some things, I might get them all mixed up. Like the time on the playground when I saw a girl go past with a pretty dress on, I turned and said to Jenny, "Wasn't that a pretty yellow dress Alice had on?" Jenny said, "Alice had on a green dress, not a yellow one." I was positive it had been yellow, so I looked around until I saw her on the other side of the playground. Sure enough, she had on a green dress, not yellow. That sort of thing happens every once in a while. It's my memory, I just can't trust it.

Nevertheless, I kept on reading the book and trying to remember as much as I could, but then I began to get a headache. I was tired and needed to stop for a break. How long was this test going to last? When was it going to be over? I wondered, because I couldn't read much longer.

Suddenly, out of the corner of my eye, I noticed that the girl next to me was standing quietly beside her desk. Was she through already? I glanced around—almost everyone in the room was standing and I had barely read half the material. I knew I would never finish in time. Well, I'm certainly not going to be the last one to stand up, I thought, they'll think I'm stupid. I never want anyone to think that. I closed my folder and stood up. Just then the teacher said, "That's all, class; pass your folders forward. It's time to go home now, but tomorrow morning we'll have a test to see how well you remember."

Remember! I remember nothing, I thought, and I don't even have an excuse for not remembering. If I don't have the facts and the answers organized in my mind, everything I've read just wanders around up there, and I can't always find it later. Sometimes when my mind doesn't tell me things right away, I think I don't know them. But then, later, I remember. At other times I may know something but I can't remember what it is. Like when I know my lesson, I might not remember it when the teacher asks me a question, but later the answer comes to me.

One time I was talking to Ella and she said, "What was King Ferdinand's wife's name?" I laughed and said, "What a silly name, Ferdinand. The only Ferdinand I ever heard of was Ferdinand the Bull." "Well, you've heard of Christopher Columbus, haven't you?" "Of course," I said, "He got money from Queen Isabella and King

Ferdinand for ships to find a new route to India, but he discovered America instead." "Why!" she said indignantly. "You just told me you never heard of King Ferdinand!" "Oh, that Ferdinand." I was shocked. How could I have forgotten King Ferdinand? Of course, I knew him! I tried to excuse myself. "I guess I didn't remember him because you didn't say Queen Isabella first." I knew that was a silly excuse, but it was the truth and I didn't know what else to say.

When I was studying, it helped me to remember if the teacher gave questions or an outline to follow as we read. That way the lesson seemed to have more order and meaning to it.

LEARNING TO READ ALOUD

Sometimes when we had to read aloud in class, the teacher complained about stuttering or reading too fast, but I found a good method that always pleased my teachers. I learned to read slowly and smoothly, pronouncing each word distinctly, syllable by syllable, as I was reading the word ahead of where I was reading out loud. When teachers heard how well I read, they always assumed I knew what I had read. However, the time and energy expended on reading aloud in this manner were so exhausting that I never really knew a word I'd read.

A NEW UNDERSTANDING

That night I was worried about that speed-reading test, so I decided I'd better talk to my father about it. That evening I walked into the living room where I knew he'd be, sitting in his favorite chair, reading. He was always reading. He even had a special way of reading: he'd read for a while, close the book on his finger to keep his place, frown, mutter something to himself and look off somewhere. Then he might turn back a page or two to re-read something. Reading to him was not a straightforward matter, reading to him was to study and to analyze.

I walked up to him and said, "Daddy, I can't read." My father looked up at me, laughed and laid his book on the table. "What are you talking about? You can read!" I told him about what happened at school that day, about how slow I was. I complained too that I had to read everything three times before I remembered or understood what I had read. He said, "Well, there's nothing wrong with that. I have to read everything three times myself. Pay no attention to that silly teacher. She doesn't know what she's talking about."

My dad was real smart. He knew everything, so I knew if he thought I was all right—I was all right. We were never given another speed-reading test, so things went along smoothly during the rest of my grade-school years. Yet, to this day reading is so stressful I have never read a book without first looking in the back to see how many pages I'll have to struggle through. ■

Editor's note: Frances Byfield Pitts, who discovered her own dyslexia 15 years after graduating college, has recently developed a love for writing. She lives in Michigan.

"The diagnosis of my learning disability changed my life. Thank you NCLD for your awareness programs and thanks to those who made it possible for me to succeed."

Stan Wattles
Driver, Indy Racing League

FOR SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION
PLEASE CALL (403) 287-3945

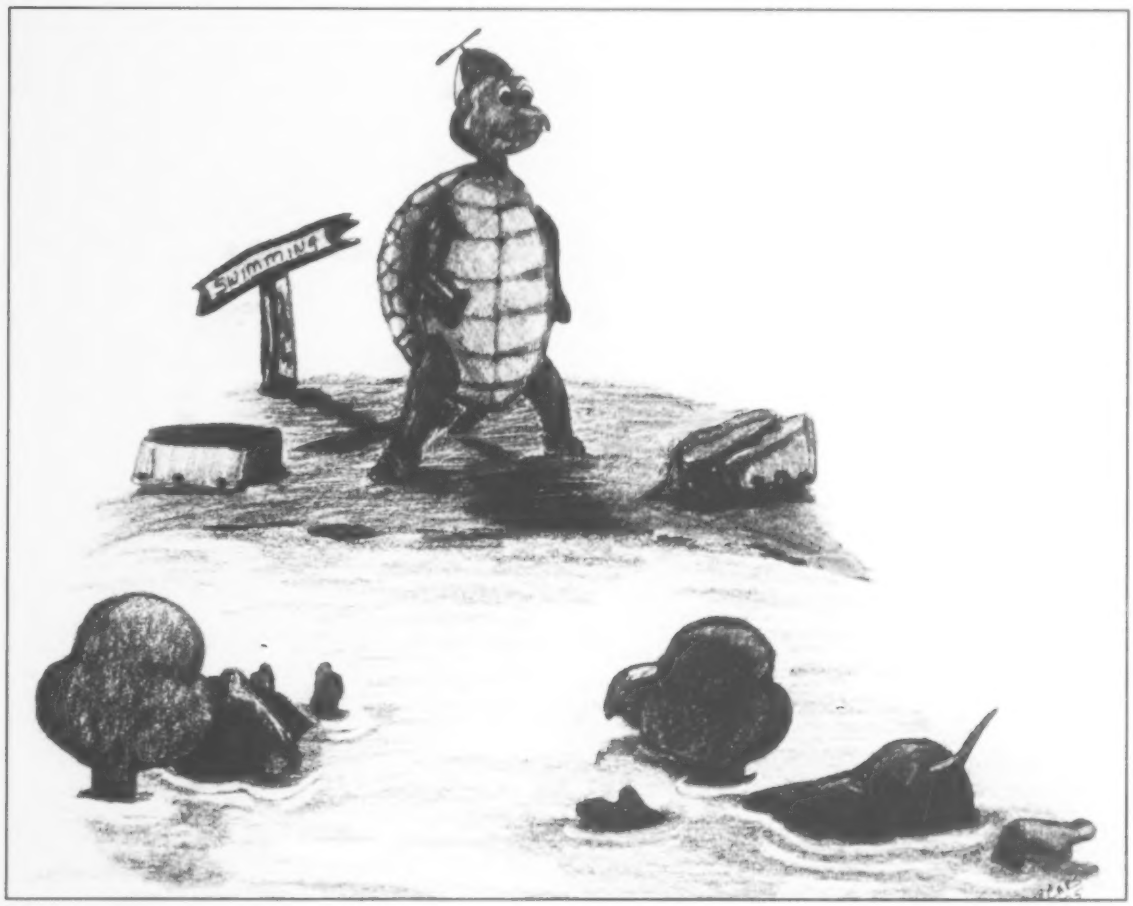
EXPLAINING LD TO A CHILD by Belinda Schilling-Leach

FOR MY CHILD

One day a little purple turtle wanted to go swimming with his friends. He had never been swimming but he had heard it was great fun. When he got to the pond, he saw all of the other little purple turtles taking off their shells by unsnapping them. This particular turtle had no snaps. He felt around his shell and there were no snaps anywhere. His friends came over to help. They searched all over to find his snaps. Finally, one of his friends spotted a button. They all agreed that this must be the way his shell comes off. The little purple turtle looked a little more and found several buttons. He quickly unbuttoned them and his shell fell to the ground. Once his shell came off, all the purple turtles ran happily to the water. They jumped and splashed and swam all day.

You are like this little purple turtle. You can swim just as well as all the other turtles but you take your shell off in a different way. That is the way it is for you, especially in school. When all the students are learning in one way, you need to learn differently. You have the ability to learn just the same as the little purple turtle had the ability to swim. Going to a special class or having a special teacher help you, is so that you have the same chance at learning that all the other students have. ■

Editor's Note: Belinda Schilling-Leach is studying to become a teacher of students with learning disabilities and resides in Missouri.



P. Carson

UNICORNS AND MAGIC BOXES by Judy and Jessica Levitt

I'm just like other kids in lots of ways. I like pizza and ice cream and summer vacation.

I like going to the zoo and having friends over to play. I laugh when my dog licks my face and I cry when I fall down. But in some ways I'm different.

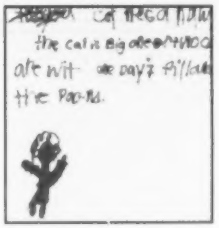
When my teacher reads a story to the class, I have trouble listening.

I find myself in a field where there are unicorns playing...or in a castle where an angel comes out of a magic box.

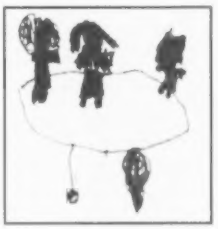
When it is time for silent reading, I am the only one with a picture book. Some of the words look familiar but they refuse to be my friend.

Other kids say my writing is sloppy, but I try very hard to stay in the lines and make all the letters the same size. Why do they all have to be the same anyway?

I wish I could read what I write. In music everyone else can sing the right words. I watch their



mouths and try to copy. I'm very good at pretending. Then why doesn't anyone want to play with me at recess? Sometimes I feel lonely, but my imaginary friend keeps me company. We have a great time together on the swings—for a while.



My mom and dad say that I am special and that they love to be with me. They say I teach them a lot.

My teachers say I have a great imagination, but they don't know that sometimes I like to imagine that I am a "regular" kid.

Then again—maybe the world needs unicorns and magic boxes. ■

Editor's Note: Judy Levitt is an actress and teacher. Her daughter, Jessica, is now in the eighth grade in Ithaca, NY.

Fisher Development
thanks NCLD for its visionary leadership

FISHER DEVELOPMENT, INC.
GENERAL CONTRACTORS

New York San Francisco Chicago Washington, DC

LETTER TO OUR SON

BY JAMES AND CLAIRE SOLLARS

PARENTS' TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

Editor's note: Mr. and Mrs. Sollars wrote this letter to their son when he graduated from a special LD school in Kentucky and returned to a mainstream setting as a sixth grader.

Dear Jes,

You know that we have told you that this week is very special. You will be graduating this Wednesday night. Normally, we give you gifts for special occasions. This time we will not be giving you a toy, video game, movie, or piece of sporting goods that you would like to have. Tonight we will only be giving you this letter.

We are writing this to let you know how much we love you. Sometimes we lose sight of this in our daily routines. We get angry with each other trying to get all the things done that need to be done on a very tight schedule. Today we want to remind you that we have waited a long time to have a little boy in our family. We are happy you are with us. We love to watch you grow and play. We think you are full of an amazing amount of energy. We know that you can be very funny. We know that you are capable of displaying great concern and affection for us and for the animals on the farm. We are amazed at the made-up stories you can tell and at your capacity to never forget allowance money or promises we make to you. We complain about your messes, but we admire the detailed worlds you build with your blocks, cars, play dough, stones, and other stuff. We like to watch you ride your bike. We're amazed at your skill on video games. We think you

have a real aptitude for sports. You have a strong body that will endure strenuous exercise and develop great stamina.

These past three years have been very special. You have attended the best school in this part of the country for children with language differences. We hope that this experience will be in your memory for a lifetime. We were very pleased that you had an opportunity to attend such a wonderful school. I'm sure that you will remember for a long time the special teachers and friends you made. We hope that you understand that you can and should feel good about yourself. We also hope that you have learned that with hard work you can learn. We hope you have learned enough to ask for the help you need so that you can continue to make school progress.

Your family knows that school will never be an easy task for you. We have told you in jest that your gifted area is going to be "Hard Work." In fact, we really do mean just what we say. At The Springer School the teachers believe you are a hard worker. They believe you are focused on the tasks they present and that you are willing to work hard to succeed. We hope that you will make every effort to continue this routine in your new school this fall.

As parents, it is our job, and our wish, to help you succeed with your life. At some point, though, this job will become yours.

We are hoping that with this change you will have a little more time to work on some things that you have not been able to do because of so much time traveling. Seventy miles each day and four separate car pools was a real juggling act some days! We want to have more time to be just a "regular" family. With Springer's help, we believe we can do this better than we did before. We want you to have a little more time to play. We hope you have time to find a few good friends. We also want you to have some time to find out if you like to farm as much as your Dad likes to farm. We want to know if you like living in the country.

When you were four years old, you would tell us the most amazing stories. The problem was that no one understood what you were trying to say. I can still remember how angry you would get when we didn't understand. Since then, we have worked very hard to try to help you with your speech and learning difficulties. It had taken us years of first not understanding what was wrong. Then it took more years to try to understand what would help you. You know that all of this learning effort needs to continue, but in making this change we hope that some other good things will happen for you. As you grow older we hope that you will have more time to find something that you can do very well. As a matter of fact, we hope that you will find something you love to do—something that you can do better than anyone else!

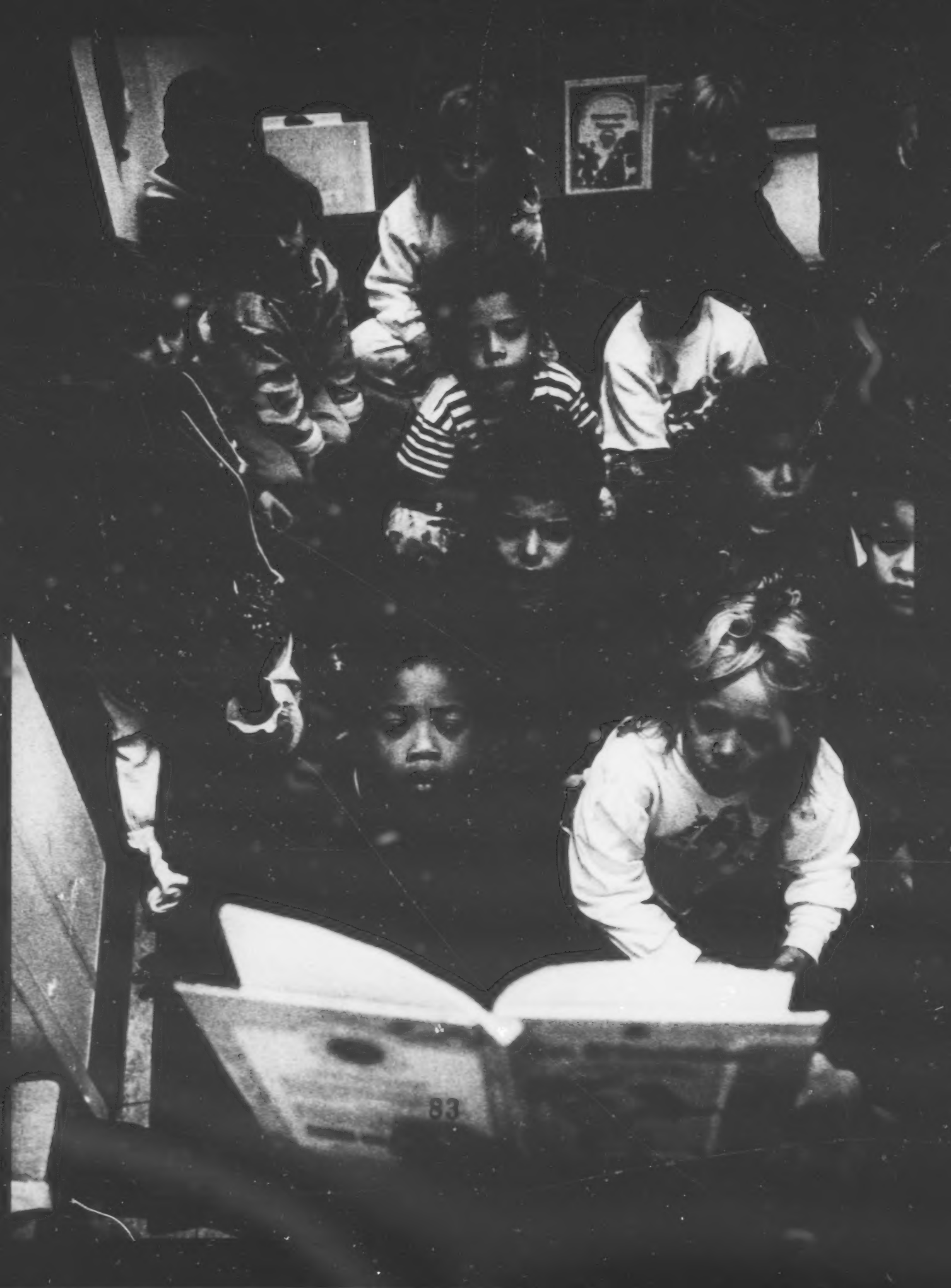
As you grow into a young man, we wish you the best. You have many more years of growing up to do. Your burdens will always be a little heavier than your friends' burdens, but living with a disadvantage is not always bad. Sometimes this makes you a better person. The burden makes you choose your goals very carefully, and it makes you more caring towards other people. The world may briefly feel sorry for someone who is different, but it will only rejoice when each individual finds a way to be a winner. As parents, it is our job, and our wish to help you succeed with your life. At some point, though, this job will become yours.

It is our wish today to celebrate with you the success that you have found at The Springer School. We are so proud of you! You came home with so many awards last Friday. You have worked very hard to finish all of your homework, practice reading, and finish long term projects.

We love our little son!

Sincerely,
MOM & DAD

82



A WALK WITH DENIAL... A PARENT'S FRIEND

BY DIANE PURCHASE

A FRIEND NAMED 'DENIAL'

When my son began having problems with his school work, I began a walk with a new friend, a friend named "denial." As a parent, denying to myself that my child might have a learning disability was easy to do, after all learning disabilities are a hidden handicap that you cannot see. For him, my denial caused undue stresses and frustrations that I will never be able to erase.

TRY HARDER

He was labeled in the first grade as a child who just wouldn't slow down to do his writing. At school he was repeatedly told to try harder, slow down, and "really" put effort into what he was doing. We were told he could do it, and for us to try hard not to let him settle.

SELF-ESTEEM

In second grade, his teacher took this child's fragile self-esteem and brought him to the furthermost depths. He was forever being told to stop rushing. He was asked, daily, to go home and repeat the work that had already been accomplished. Penmanship became his enemy. My husband and I were called in for conference after conference to be told that our child was not putting enough effort into his school work. We responded to him at home with added pressures and frustrations.

When we asked the second grade teacher if perhaps our child could have a learning disability, (his father is dyslexic) she told us that we were just being overly protective parents. We were told by her that, as his parents, we could not possibly be objective. She said that he was too smart to have a disability. Unfortunately for our son, we believed her. She was, after all, the teacher, the professional who held the training and wisdom when it came to school matters. We were wrong!

A WEIGHT IS LIFTED

When his third grade teacher came to us, in the first weeks of school, and said she thought our son was learning disabled we finally had someone who recognized what we had known all along. For him, just hearing that there was a reason for his struggle lifted from his shoulders a weight of extreme proportions. With the learning disability known, my son's self-esteem soon began to heal.

CHILDREN, CROSSING THE LINE

My son began his educational experience just as millions of children do each year. When we started out long ago, we were considered, "Regular Education," now we are "Special Education." I write this story of my "walk with denial" to share with parents two things I have learned along the way. The first is that we, as parents, do in fact know our children best. If we feel something is wrong, we owe it to them to search for the answers. The second thing I have learned along the way is the importance of remembering that whether education is regular or special, it all has to do with children. ■

Editor's Note: Diane Purchase is a wife and mother of three children, the Co-Chair to the Springfield Parent Advisory Council to Special Education, and an advocate for all children. She lives in Massachusetts.

GROWING UP SUCCESSFULLY

BY JACQUELINE J. KINGON

My son Michael is 30, lives independently in his own apartment, and drives. He currently works as a piano accompanist for two world-renowned dance companies. He also works at a prominent YMHA School of Music as an assistant piano teacher and accompanist. This summer he will be a piano instructor and Chamber Music Coach at a prestigious Chamber Music Festival on Long Island.

People who meet my son today have trouble believing that he once had five or six tantrums a day. He was in special ed classes until he was 19 years old. His early schools had some children who were so aggressive they bit other children, threw furniture, picked locks, and set fires. Michael ate baby food until he was 7 1/2. All my pocketbooks had plastic liners. All I wanted was a bag that didn't leak. I went through ten blenders as I would puree whole chickens and anything else nutritious.

It could take me over an hour to walk two blocks because there were so many perseverations: jumping on staircases, touching fire hydrants, and reciting verses. In fact there was absolutely no part of his life that didn't have rigid routines and compulsive activities. By age 20 he had attended eleven different public and private schools, three different camps, and had six different piano teachers in three different music schools.

From the beginning there was

delayed development and at six months we learned he had optic atrophy in the left eye, and was blind in that eye. He walked at 17 months. At age two, we began our journey through the maze of doctors, teachers, and therapists, beginning with a diagnosis of "who knows what it is and that will cost you $100," and continuing with a visit with a psychiatrist at a prestigious university medical center who suggested the names of some nursery schools for retarded children. The neurologist at another major NYC hospital completed an overnight study including a neuroencephalogram (a test no longer done today) and could find no medical reason for Michael's delayed development. He could only tell us all the disorders that Michael didn't have, which we already knew.

At this point we were confronted with a problem we were unprepared for. Michael was alternatively diagnosed as brain injured (a term then in vogue), retarded, or emotionally disturbed. These diagnoses were made by outstanding physicians at major New York hospitals who not only were adamant in their conclusion but who ridiculed the other diagnoses.

We knew from that time on that we, and we alone, were in charge. Our responsibility could not be delegated.

A DECISION

We knew then that we had to make a choice. We knew Michael was physically impaired, that he was smart but monumentally uneven in his development, and that we had done nothing wrong.

We also knew from that time on that we, and we alone, were in charge. Our responsibility could not be delegated.

A LOVE FOR MUSIC

The only thing Michael responded to was music. I frequently sang songs, leaving off the final notes, and he would sing the endings. I made up songs, like, "Michael has eyes, Michael has a nose," and touched each part of his body to the song. He enjoyed *Sesame Street* and knew all the music. We had a piano and I played simple music. By age three he could pick out *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* and other melodies. By 4 1/2, he could play a number of classical pieces by ear and *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* in every major and minor key.

At school, the staff doctor insisted that he saw no musical ability in Michael and that we were being unrealistic denying the seriousness of his condition. He added that if any talent emerged later, which I,e doubted, it couldn't be channeled to any practical use. When we asked if he had heard Michael play, he said that he had but described his playing as "pretty but meaningless." When we got home we asked Michael, "What did you play for the man at the school?" He went over to the piano and played a middle movement of a Mozart sonata which the doctor did not recognize. Knowing a lot more about the doctor's musical ability than we cared to, we withdrew Michael from this school hoping that we could find a more receptive audience.

In Michael's next school the children appeared to have a similar range of abilities and disabilities as in the prior one, but they were now called Brain Injured instead of Emotionally Disturbed. In other words, setting political correctness aside for the moment, one or two of his classmates looked really "out of it," and one or two looked so "normal" and high functioning you wondered why they were there. The program seemed no better and no worse than his previous school, and we liked the teacher, but the tuition was $2,000 more than a seemingly parallel school on the other side of town, so we and a few others transferred. Not long after, the school closed, and the headmaster was arrested and convicted for embezzling funds.

School number four had a program and a population similar to the previous two and the classification was changed again. Instead of Brain Injured, the label learning disabled, which had now become more fashionable, was used.

Michael remained in this school for five years.

although, after three years, I felt he had reached a plateau. Year after year the children did arithmetic, reading, and spelling, but the work rarely got much harder. Michael told me years later when he went on to do an extra page one teacher actually said, "Go no further."

When Michael was about 10 1/2 we insisted that he begin a program of travel training. Almost as a reflex reaction, they said, once again, he was not ready. At the time, we lived across the street from a young man who had Down Syndrome and was able to travel by public bus and subway, and we knew our son was brighter. The school protested but my husband and I removed him from the daily school bus and taught him how to travel by himself on public buses, including transferring. He loved it and gained much confidence.

We remained at this school for two more years, trying to get into other programs, and always being rejected. But after spending two summers in the lowest functioning group at a summer camp owned by the husband of one of the directors of our targeted school, he was accepted. This was his fifth placement and he remained there for two years. Their program ended at age 13 and now Michael was 13.

Finding the sixth school was difficult. There were no suitable private high schools in Manhattan that would take Michael. Half of his classmates went to some private school in Queens that we thought was inferior and half went to residential schools. We explored one residential school, where the staff viewed Michael's ability to play the piano as a savant trait even though he could read music. When we asked what happened to their students after graduation, we were told they moved on to residential communities. We considered lots of other schools but he was rejected by all of them.

In desperation we turned to the New York City Board of Education. Once we had entered the system of private schools, no good news about the public school ever reached our ears. Doctors and private school educators made us fear public programs as inferior to their programs. Some mothers shunned me because I was considering sending my child to a public junior high school.

FINALLY, A DIFFERENCE

Enrolling Michael in a public junior high school, his seventh school, was perhaps the best educational move we ever made. It changed his life. Their program was far superior to anything we had before. They insisted he skip a grade so he would be with his right age group. The private schools were all ungraded. I was assured that they would help him make up for lost time and they were true to their word. They placed him in a special class for academics but insisted he take gym with the regular students. That was quite a stretch! Yes, we worried about a larger class size and the unremitting energy of the place, but it had growth opportunities the small schools lacked. There were different teachers for different subjects. This was enriching in and of itself. The more people Michael met and more experiences he had, the more ways he discovered he could learn.

As an added bonus, this junior high school had a school orchestra whose teacher saw his musical abilities as talent and not as a savant syndrome. The other schools rarely let him play the piano. They said, "The other children will feel bad because they don't know how to play." This school put on shows like *The Sound of Music* and Michael played the entire score for their productions. He even won the All City Music Award. He remained at this junior high school for two years.

Encouraged by the school staff, Michael took the competitive music exam for the High School of Performing Arts and scored in the top percentile. He got in! When we asked about his academics, some Board of Education administrators, who now had discovered the learning disabled part of him, said he could go to one school almost an hour away in the morning to be in a special ed class, then travel to Performing Arts for the music program in the afternoon. We refused. We insisted that since he passed their exam, they must provide the appropriate academics and necessary accommodations. After many threats and fights, Michael was enrolled in a special ed. class—for one! He was its only pupil. This was his eighth school.

He attended Performing Arts for seven

months and then my husband got a job in Washington, DC and we moved. In Washington he attended three different high schools. His ninth school was a small private Quaker school. The students were academic and emotional wrecks and the administration was lackadaisical. Finally, he entered his eleventh and final high school, a large Quaker school which we all loved. He learned to drive a car and again played music for school shows. He graduated with a real high school diploma, not a certificate. It was a wonderful place.

Michael's music education was parallel to regular education. I felt he outgrew his teachers after a while after learning their styles and their repertoires. He had six different piano teachers and attended three different music schools and one music camp. In the first years of learning how to read music, age seven to ten, he began by having two half-hour lessons a week. I also hired a high school student to come twice a week to help him practice.

Parents must be ever vigilant lest opportunities for new growth slip through their fingers

TIME MATTERS

I'll let you in on a secret because I have been both a teacher and parent. It's critical that you know this: time moves differently for parents and teachers. Parents are and should be in a race against the clock. Time is your child's only commodity and, as he or she ages, it becomes a dwindling asset and finally a liability. There is no such clock for the teacher. Each year, as I did, they get another group of children. It is not a concern to teachers where one student will be two or three or ten years later.

I suppose if man lived to 300 and childhood ended at age 65, no one would mind school activities that took a great deal of time and had questionable value. The next time your child comes home from school with a list of foods mice eat or the names of the squirrels in the park, and his or her academic work does not seem to be getting harder, find out why. Michael was 14 years old before he learned long division. He could have learned this years before.

In a blink of an eye, the words, "I'm not ready to do that," become, "I'm too old to do that." Bad learning habits harden. As difficult as it is to motivate and challenge your eight- or nine-year old it is even harder to physically control and intellectually stimulate your 18- or 19-year-old.

Not all children, abled or disabled, have a talent that can be channeled into a career. But parents must be ever vigilant lest opportunities for new growth slip through their fingers. A child who sings on key and taps out music has some talent. What your child is interested in shows where his abilities lie. If one can read the alphabet, one can learn to sight sing and read music. As an adult they may sing in a choir or play an instrument which makes them appear special to their peers. Going from the *Jingle Bells* of early years to the Handel's *Messiah* of later years takes a lot of repetition and a lot of pushing.

You must make sure you are not contributing to keeping your child at baby levels by not exposing him to higher and harder possibilities because he or she won't like it. And you must be sure you are not contributing to keeping your child at baby levels because you won't like him not liking it—or liking you. Don't let the words, "It is better to be safe than sorry," turn into a cry in later years of "I'm sorry I was so safe."

Sometimes when Michael is out late with friends I don't know, I worry—especially in this city. But we made our choice, some 30 years ago, to aim toward freedom and independence. There is no better time to avail yourself of technology and education and put it to good use. When my son was young, organizations such as the National Center for Learning Disabilities either did not exist or were in their infancy. Today parents have many supporters in the professional community. It's your choice now, and it isn't easy. But one thing I can assure you, some 25 or 30 years from now, it will be too late. ■

Editor's Note: Jacqueline J. Kingon is a parent of a young adult with learning disabilities. She lives in New York City.

THE ROAD TAKEN

BY NICKI ARNOLD

Fifteen to twenty percent, or roughly one in five school age children, have a learning disability. Some researchers suggest that if these children are not taught effectively, they choose one or more of these five coping mechanisms: giving up, acting out, withdrawing, developing alternative areas of success, or persevering. Giving up ranges from becoming learned helpless academically to dropping out. Thirty-five percent of LD students drop out of high school. Acting out ranges from being the class clown to juvenile delinquency. Fifty percent of juvenile delinquents tested have undetected learning disabilities. Withdrawing ranges from sitting quietly in class to clinical depression.

Albert Einstein, Bruce Jenner, and Leonardo Da Vinci are examples of learning disabled individuals who found alternative areas of success. Unfortunately, repeated academic failure makes it virtually impossible for many learning disabled youth to continue on the road of perseverance. Adam is a shining example of a learning disabled adolescent who took the road of perseverance.

ADAM

Adam's mother described her handsome 13- year-old son's learning disability as "classic dyslexia." His father and two younger brothers also have varying degrees of dyslexia. Prior to entering school Adam was a happy energetic youngster full of self-confidence. By the end of fourth grade, the academic demands of his local school had become excruciatingly difficult. His mother described these years as "humiliating" for Adam. Although his third grade teacher was nurturing, his academic needs were not being met and his self-esteem was plummeting. Since fifth grade, Adam attended Windward, a private school for children who have learning disabilities. Through direct instruction of a carefully sequenced phonics program and a structured writing program, Adam began to close the gap between his academic achievement and his above-average intelligence. This academic competence helped to rebuild his self-esteem.

I AM WHAT I LEARN

According to Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, a child's first school years expose him to recognition from people other than his family. This stage, simply stated, is, "I am what I learn." Successful academic achievement leads to a

positive feeling of competence; unsuccessful academic achievement leads to feelings of inferiority. As a result of academic failure, the learning disabled child often approaches the storm and stress of adolescence with the additional handicaps of inferiority and low self-esteem. An adolescent is typically expected to become more independent; however, the very nature of dyslexia requires a greater dependence on adults for educational and emotional assistance. This dependence can escalate the already stressful internal adolescent conflicts for the dyslexic youth.

Adolescence for Adam brought an added challenge, the Bar Mitzvah. The ceremony, which marks the entry of a Jewish child into the adult religious community, varies within different Jewish movements and with the child's abilities. It is customary for the Bar Mitzvah youth to participate in a religious ceremony by chanting from the Old Testament (Torah) in Hebrew. Learning a second language is often extremely difficult for a dyslexic, and Hebrew is no exception.

The Hebrew language presented a great challenge for Adam. Unlike most languages, it is read from right to left, has 26 consonants, and additional vowel points or dot-like markings which represent vowels. The Torah scroll, from which the Bar Mitzvah youth reads, includes no punctuation and has no vowels. In other words, Adam first had to learn to read Hebrew with the vowels and then to chant from the Torah which has only consonants. For the dyslexic who has directional, phonological, and syntactical deficits, this is extremely difficult. Although Adam could have chosen to read his Torah portion in English, his friends were all learning Hebrew and Adam did not want to be different from his friends in still another way.

A close friend of the family who had known Adam since birth agreed to help him learn his Torah reading. His tutor said, "From the beginning we both knew two things: it would be very difficult and Adam would do it." The tutor arranged to meet with Adam for fifteen minute sessions, three times per week. They worked together syllable by syllable, word by word for a year and a half, learning sixteen lines of text.

Another problem for Adam was that the words on a page seem to move up and down. Adam's tutor observed this, when the pointer Adam used for reading from the Torah scroll jumped from one line to another. They solved this problem by having Adam follow the line faintly scored into the parchment of the Torah with the pointer, enabling Adam to keep his place.

Adam attributes his success to 'working hard every day and trying not to let anything get in the way'

SUCCESS

On October 7, 1995, Adam chanted his Torah portion in flawless Hebrew. His tutor said "Adam taught me more than I taught him." Living the theme of his Bar Mitzvah, "From Generation to Generation," he donated some of the money he received to a charity for elderly Jewish people. Adam attributes his success to "working hard every day and trying not to let anything get in your way."

Adam and his mentor and family are brilliant examples of supreme effort and motivation. They also reinforce some of what we know to be important ingredients for learning disabled individuals to succeed.

- Early support from family.
- Early diagnosis of learning disability.
- Developing an area of success.
- Appropriate instruction.
- A commitment to help others.
- Never say you cannot do it.
- It's okay to be finished, but not okay to give up.
- Find humor, even in tedious study.
- If things get tough, take breaks but go right back and "beat it." ■

Editor's Note: Nicki Arnold is a doctoral student in clinical psychology at the University of Hartford and is a member of the NCLD Board of Directors.

ATLANTA FALCONS

The Atlanta Falcons know the importance of teamwork. . . . . .

Please join together to help the millions of children with learning disabilities.

With our Compliments

ROLEX

SERVICE PROVIDERS

NCLD Policy: NCLD is pleased to present to Their World readers messages from a number of providers of services for individuals with learning disabilities. It is NCLD's policy, however, not to recommend or endorse any one specific program, speaker, school or instructional material or technique.

Individualized Ego Supportive Counseling...
The Cornerstone of the Maplebrook Experience
Responsibility Increases Self Esteem

R.I.S.E.*

WE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

"Thank you for giving me the opportunity to provide my daughter with the star dust that makes her world a happy place."
Maplebrook parent

"Test scores, both by Maplebrook and by independent examiners, have demonstrated tremendous growth in my daughter's self esteem."
Maplebrook parent

R.I.S.E

- **AWAKENS THE LEARNER IN EACH STUDENT**
- **PROMOTES RESPONSIBILITY & DEVELOPS CHARACTER**
- **FOSTERS INDEPENDENCE & GROWTH**
- **ENHANCES SOCIAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

Maplebrook School is a traditional boarding school enrolling youngsters with learning differences and A.D.D.

*** Internationally acclaimed program now in its fourth printing.**

MAPLEBROOK SCHOOL • AMENIA, NY • 914-373-8191

Institute for Developmental Behavioral Neurology / Biological Psychiatry

Drake D. Duane, M.D.
Laura L. Falduto, Ph.D.
Tanis Bryan, Ph.D.
and Staff

Providing an integrated scientific and social assessment / treatment of developmental conditions which influence educational achievement and personal adjustment through the lifespan.

10210 N. 92nd Street
Suite #300
Scottsdale, Arizona 85258
tel (602) 860-1222
fax (602) 860-0029
e-mail PVAQ89A@prodigy.com
Affiliated - Arizona State University

WINDWARD SCHOOL

Windward Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605

TEACHER TRAINING COURSES

- Expository Writing Instruction
- Orton-Gillingham Instruction for Reading and Spelling
- Strategies for Building Vocabulary
- Study and Research Skills

For further information call
(914) 949-5601.

Windward School is a co-educational, independent school for learning disabled students from 1st through 12th grades.

"We Wept With Joy The Day Danny Graduated."

The Pathway School has helped hundreds of students with learning disabilities accomplish things others didn't think possible . . . like graduating from high school. Our specialized programs for young people ages 5 through 21 can help your child experience success in both day and residential settings.

We can help *your* child with learning disabilities accomplish more than you may have thought possible.

Find out more about Pathways today. (610) 277-0660.

Consider your child • Consider the future • Choose the Pathway School

THE PATHWAY SCHOOL

162 Egypt Rd. Norristown, PA 19403-3090 • (610) 277-0660 • Fax (610) 539-1973

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SERVICE PROVIDERS

NEWGRANGE

... providing specialized educational programs for people with learning disabilities

The Newgrange School
52 Lafayette Ave., Trenton, NJ 08610 • 609-394-2255

... a full curriculum independent day school for students aged 8 to 18, of average to above average ability who have specific learning disabilities.

The Newgrange Community Outreach Center
2-4 Chambers St., Princeton, NJ 08542 • 609-924-6204

... extending the mission of The Newgrange School

The Center provides innovative educational resources through workshops, seminars and consultations, serving employers, educators, families and adults concerned with learning disabilities.

Hours: Tuesday thru Thursday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

ASSETS School

for
GIFTED, DYSLEXICS, AND GIFTED/DYSLEXICS
One Ohana Nui Way, Honolulu, Hawaii 96818
(808) 423-1356
FAX (808) 422-1920

Accredited K-12

- Individualized Education
- Multisensory Teaching (e.g., Orton-Gillingham, Slingerland)
- Hands-on Learning
- Comprehensive Documentation (IEP)
- Small Student-to-Teacher Ratio
- Structured Environment
- Individual and Group Counseling
- Multi-disciplinary Team Approach
- Tuition Assistance Available
- Summer Science, Art, and Computer Academies
- Comprehensive Community Testing
  - Intelligence and Aptitude
  - Academic Achievement
  - Gifted/Creativity
- Summer Teacher Training (e.g. Slingerland, Orton-Gillingham, Mortensen Math)

Recipient of the prestigious National Blue Ribbon Elementary School Recognition Award for 1991-92

Serving high potential individuals with different learning needs since 1955

EAGLE HILL SCHOOL GREENWICH

Eagle Hill School serves Children with Learning Disabilities, ages 6-16, co-ed; Day and 5-Day Residential Programs.

- Small, individual classes
- Remedial Language immersion program
- Study skills instruction
- Success orientation
- Self-esteem enhancement
- Social skills training
- Interscholastic sports program
- Full extra-curricular program
- Psychoeducational Diagnostic Clinic and College Placement Services Available
- Fully accredited by the Connecticut State Department of Education and the CAIS

For more information contact:
Rayna Griffin - Director of Admissions
(203) 622-9240

Eagle Hill School
45 Glenville Rd., Greenwich, CT 06831

Your Child Will Be Successful Here

Eagle Hill Southport

A School For Children With Learning Disabilities

- Structured, success-oriented learning environment
- Language based curriculum • 3:1 Student/staff ratio
- Transitional, non-graded coed program • Ages 6-16
- Full afternoon recreational and athletic program
- Individualized diagnostic instruction
- Summer Program

203-254-2044 • 214 Main St., Southport, CT 06490
Connecticut State Approved Special Education Program
Connecticut Association of Independent Schools. Financial Aid Available

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Learning Disabled Students...LEAP To A Brighter Future

LYNN UNIVERSITY'S LEAP (Lynn Educational Alternative Program) is an innovative post-secondary program.

Nestled in the Adirondack Mountains of New York, LEAP provides special academic support services to non-traditional learners and learning disabled students. This transition program leads to a certificate in Hospitality or Human Services. LEAP enables students to acquire the skills to enter college or achieve career placement. LEAP graduates may be considered for admission to Lynn University.

LEAP
LYNN EDUCATIONAL ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM

Rt. 28, Box 1159
Old Forge, NY 13420-1159
315-369-2740
800-351-5327

- Certificate, Transition and Summer Programs
- Rolling Admissions for Qualified Candidates
- GED and SAT Preparation • A Variety of Paid Internships • Nurturing Environment

LYNN UNIVERSITY

1 in 5 Children Struggles to Read.* Parents Struggle for Answers...Here's a Start.

Bridges To Reading includes:

- **8 strategy-based booklets**
- **2 audio tapes** of the booklets
- **4 reference guides** with additional resources including guides on tutoring and ADD
- **Activity booklet:** "50 Fun Ways to Improve Reading"
- **Plus more helpful, hands-on tools!**

A comprehensive kit to **identify**, **understand**, *and* **address** *reading problems.*

Bridges To Reading

A Kit of First-Step Strategies

To order a kit call **1-800-471-9545**

KITS ARE $250 PLUS TAX AND SHIPPING.
QUANTITY DISCOUNTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE.

Written by reading specialists and education experts, **Bridges To Reading** *shows parents how to find answers.*

Bridges To Reading *was developed by the Parents Educational Resource Centre (PERC) and underwritten by the Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation, a nonprofit foundation dedicated to improving the lives of children with learning differences.*

SERVICE PROVIDERS

Before she discovered RFB&D, Jody believed people who said she could not succeed. Now she is majoring in Classical Greek Mythology at Oberlin College.

"RFB&D gave me the tools and the confidence to learn at my own pace. They showed me that I wasn't stupid or slow."

For almost half a century, Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D) has opened a new realm of possibilities for people like Jody. RFB&D is the only national nonprofit organization that lends recorded books at all academic levels to people who cannot read standard print because of a learning disability.

With 75,000 titles in our collection, people with learning disabilities can obtain the resources they need to achieve success from kindergarten to graduate school and into the professional arena.

To find out how RFB&D can make a difference,
Call 1-800-221-4792
Or visit our website at http://www.rfbd.org

Brush Ranch School
since 1970

A coeducational, residential school for children with learning differences. Brush Ranch is located in the Santa Fe National Forest near Santa Fe, New Mexico, and offers an extensive program of academic, vocational, social and recreational opportunities.

Accreditation:
North Central Association
NM-Board of Education
CA-Board of Education

Admissions:
P. O. Box 2450
Santa Fe, NM 87504
(505) 757-6114

VISTA

V ocational placement and on-the-job supports
I ndependent skills taught in a hands-on approach
S upported community living options
T ransition to the adult world
A lternative and individualized instruction

An alternative post secondary program for young adults with learning disabilities with options for long term supports in the community

VISTA of Westbrook assists young adults to live independently, work successfully and make long term friendships.

For further information contact:
VISTA of Westbrook, Inc.
1356 Old Clinton Road, Westbrook, CT 06498
860 399-8080

"Helping young adults help themselves."

PARENTS OR GUARDIANS OF STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES OR ADD

Are you looking for the BEST choice?

The Hill Top Preparatory School offers a comprehensive academic and clinical program for students in grades 6 through 12, as well as a 13th year college transitional program.

For information, contact
James H. Fisher, Director of Admissions,
(610) 527-3230

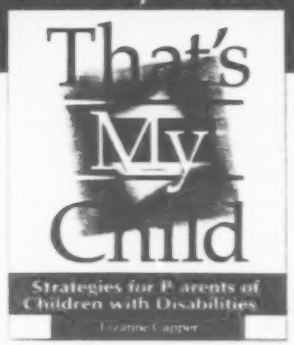
THE HILL TOP PREPARATORY SCHOOL
FOUNDED 1971
ROSEMONT PA

Hill Top
PREPARATORY SCHOOL
25 YEARS OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE
737 S. ITHAN AVENUE, ROSEMONT, PA 19010 • FAX (610) 527-7683

SERVICE PROVIDERS

From Child & Family Press

A division of the Child Welfare League of America



"Excellent resource...*That's My Child* covers all the bases. I was especially impressed with the chapter on working with health care professionals, since those services are crucial to the successful overall treatment of a child with a disability."

—S. Norman Sherry, M.D.
Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatrics
Harvard Medical School

That's My Child offers sensible advice, straightforward information, and practical examples. Written from personal experience, *That's My Child* will show you how to build the support networks you and your child need.

To order:
CWLA c/o CSSC
P.O. Box 7816
300 Raritan Center Parkway
Edison, NJ 08818-7816

Or call:
800/407-6273
908/225-1900
Fax 908/417-0482

1996/0-87868-595-2/Stock #5952.....$12.95

Nationally renowned, A.C.A. accredited. State-of-the-art activities for children with minimal learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD. Stressing independence, social skills and positive self-image. Est. 1976.

- 2 to 1 camper to counselor ratio (ages 8-18)
- Located on 9-mile lake in scenic Adirondacks
- All land sports~tennis~swimming~water-skiing~sailing
- Art~music~drama~computers~academics
- Video taping~AM radio station
- Fun~friendships~growth~mastery~success

516-246-8130
Gordon & Donna Felt, Directors
15 Seabrook Lane, Stony Brook, NY 11790

CAMP NORTHWOOD

JULIE RAVENEL-LEE
Director of Admissions

Trident Academy
1455 Wakendaw Road • Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
Phone (803) 884-7046 • FAX (803) 881-8320

Educating Students With Learning Disabilities

THE KILDONAN SCHOOL

Amenia, NY 12501
(914) 373-8111

Member of NYSAIS and NAIS

For Dyslexic Students

Boys and Girls boarding - 5th through PG
Day Students - 3rd through PG

Serving the needs of normal, intelligent, dyslexic students since 1969.

Dunnabeck at Kildonan

Founded in 1955, the oldest established summer program for dyslexic students in the United States

The Churchill Center.

Reaching out to the local, national and international communities with information and innovative educational programs on learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders.

Current Center programs include:
Social Skills Programs for Ages 7-16;
Behavior Management Courses;
The Parent Program;
The Churchill Center Advisory Service;
Workshops and Courses for Professionals.

Marsha Kessler, Director.
The Churchill Center, 22 East 95th Street, New York, NY 10128, tel: 212-722-7226, fax: 212-410-3199.

THE GATEWAY SCHOOL OF NEW YORK

established 1965
921 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10021
(212) 628-3560
Dr. Davida Sherwood, Director

The Gateway School provides a unique setting for young children with learning disabilities, five to ten years old, who have average to above average intellectual potential. The program emphasizes group participation, a problem-solving approach to learning, and the development of academic skills and social competence. Individual talents are encouraged through enrichment programs in physical education, art, music.

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE:
The Gateway Social Development Program
includes curriculum and video
Workshops for Parents and Professionals
focusing on current issues in the field of learning disabilities.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SERVICE PROVIDERS

THE VANGUARD SCHOOL

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF FACILITATING STUDENT SUCESS

- Coed Residential Program Ages 11-17
- Individualized Academic Programs
- Structured for Success
- Interscholastic Sports and Social Activities
- Academic or Practical Studies Diploma
- SAT, ACT, ASVAB Testing
- Thirteenth Year Program for High School Graduates

2249 Highway 27 North
Lake Wales, FL 33853
Call 941-676-6091 FAX 941-676-8297

The Vanguard School of Lake Wales, FL, Inc. admits students of any race, color or national or ethnic origin.

Brandon Hall School

"Turning Potential Into Reality"

A Unique College Preparatory School Which Specializes In Individualization

One-to-one and Small Group Classes
For Bright Students Who:

- are academically underachieving
- need to develop study skills
- have attention deficit (ADD) problems, learning disabilities, or dyslexia

Grades 4-12
Coeducational Day & Boys' Boarding (5 & 7 day)
Postgraduate Year
Summer Session
National School of Excellence
100% College Acceptance

Call For Information:
770-394-8177

1701 Brandon Hall Drive
Atlanta, GA 30350-3799
Fax: 770-804-8821

BREHM

A U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon School of Excellence

- Serving students with learning disabilities
- Jr. High • Sr. High • Post-Secondary
- Accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- Maximum class size of eight
- Speech & Language Therapy
- Co-educational boarding facility
- Recreation program
- Social skills enhancement
- College preparatory curriculum
- Orton trained staff

BREHM PREPARATORY SCHOOL
1245 E. Grand, Carbondale, IL 62901
[618] 457-0371

THIS KEY OPENS THE DOOR TO INDEPENDENCE

INDEPENDENCE CENTER:
a residential program teaching independent living to young adults with learning disabilities.

life skills

vocation guidance & placement

counseling

OUTREACH: follow-up services

Contact: Judy Maizlish, Director
INDEPENDENCE CENTER
3640 S. Sepulveda Blvd.
Suite 102
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(310) 202-7102
SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

OAKLAND SCHOOL

near Charlottesville in the heart of Virginia

Ages 8-17 (may enroll through age 14)

Does Your Child Have Trouble Reading?

Founded in 1950, Oakland specializes in teaching reading disabled boys and girls to reach their full potential. A strong academic orientation and focus on basic skills help students prepare for a successful return to regular education.

Located on 450 acres, Oakland features a full curriculum, an extensive recreation program, and horseback riding. A seven-week summer camp and school is offered in addition to a regular school session.

For more information, please write or call:

Oakland School, Boyd Tavern, Keswick, VA 22947
(804) 293-9059

Riverview School

"Nobody Understands My Learning Disabled Adolescent . . ."

Are you looking for a school that offers the following:

Co-ed population
Social Skills Program
Certified High School Diploma
Language Based, Thematic, Integrated Curriculum
Team Approach to the Educational Program
Highly Trained Sensitive Staff
Varsity Sports Program
Life Skills Instruction
Post Secondary Programs
24 Hour Medical Care
A Setting that is:
Safe
Rural
Picturesque
Convenient Location
A 39 year History of Service to Learning Disabled Students

Riverview is that School

Riverview is a residential program for adolescents with learning disabilities and marginal intellectual impairment.

Riverview provides graduates with a recognized diploma upon completion. The student population is comprised of 115 students with approximately an equal number of males and females. Riverview's diverse student body comes from 22 states and several foreign countries.

For further information, please contact: Janet M. Lavoie
Director of Admission and Placement
Riverview School
551 Rt. 6A / East Sandwich / CAPE COD, Massachusetts 02537
Tel: (508) 888-0489 / Fax: (508) 888-1315
Riverview Understands . . .

Park Century School . . .

. . . offers a comprehensive program which addresses the ever-changing needs of bright 6-14 year old children with learning disabilities and their families.

Park Century School provides a unique learning environment, devoted to all aspects of a child's world:

- Academic Progress/Growth
- Study Skills
- Social Skills
- Emotional Well Being
- Family Relationships

Genny Shain, M.A. and Gail Spindler, M.A. - Co-Directors
2040 Stoner Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90025 • 310-478-5065

Cloister Creek

Services for students with Learning Disabilities, Language Disorders, A.D.D.

14-28 years old
Two phases
Co-ed
Residential and Day
20 acre Campus
Speech & Language Therapy
Functional Academics
Social and Life Skills
Vocational Placement

Cloister Creek offers Academic and Vocational training in:
Horticulture • Landscaping • Clerical • Sales

1280 HIGHWAY 138 S.W. P.O. BOX 80310 CONYERS, GA 30208
(770) 483-0748 or (770) 483-8793 Fax (770) 918-8217

Non-profit Organization

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SERVICE PROVIDERS

BEACON COLLEGE

A Unique Four Year College For Students With Learning Disabilities

- B.A. or A.A. Degree Programs
- Interdisciplinary academics with intensive support services.
- Field placement program providing related work experiences.
- A variety of student services emphasizing interpersonal growth and social skills.
- A faculty committed to promoting individual success.

904-787-7660
105 East Main Street • Leesburg, FL 34748

Students admitted without regard to race, creed, sex or ethnic origin.

Free A.D.D. Packet

Free for you a unique collection of reading materials on attention-deficit disorder for children, young adolescents, high school students, college students, and adults—the entire life span. This is a valuable resource for anyone living with, assessing, or coping with ADD. Call or write: **Magination Press**, 19 Union Square West, NY, NY 10003 or call (800) 825-3089; in NYS (212) 924-3344 E92

GOW SUMMER PROGRAMS

TRADITIONAL CAMPING, SOLID ACADEMICS, AND WEEKEND OVERNIGHT TRIPS (TEEN TOURS)

- A carefully considered program balancing learning and fun
- Gow is the nation's oldest preparatory school for learning differences
- Co-ed, ages 7-19 years old.

For brochure call, fax or write:

THE GOW SUMMER PROGRAMS
Emery Road, South Wales, NY 14139
1-800-332-GOW1 (4691) • (716) 652-3450 - Ext. 141
FAX: (716) 652-3457
Michael P. Holland, Director

Chapel Haven Serving the learning disabled since 1972

Judith S. Lefkowitz
Director of Admissions

1040 Whalley Ave, New Haven, CT 06515
(203) 397-4714 Fax 397-8094

Landmark School

25 YEARS

LEADING THE WAY FOR 25 YEARS IN THE EDUCATION OF STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA/LEARNING DISABILITIES

A DAY AND RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL PROVIDING FULL YEAR AND SUMMER PROGRAMS

- ELEMENTARY PROGRAM
- ACADEMIC AND EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE PROGRAMS
- COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAM
- POST-GRADUATE PROGRAM

ADMISSIONS OFFICE
P.O. BOX 227, PRIDES CROSSING, MA 01965 (508) 927-4440

THE MARY McDOWELL CENTER FOR LEARNING

A Friends school
for children with
learning disabilities
ages 5-11
Debbie Zlotowitz
Head of School

110 Schermerhorn Street
Brooklyn, New York 11201
(718)625-3939

Winston Preparatory School

An academic secondary school for the intelligent, motivated student with learning disabilities

*Remedial tutorials
*Study and organization skills
*Summer Program

Margaret M. Harbison, Admissions Director
4 West 76th Street, New York, NY 10023
(212)496-8400

A SYSTEMATIC MULTISENSORY READING SPELLING PROGRAM

Includes comprehensive manuals, phoneme cards, letter blocks, workbooks, worksheets, games, mastery books, and spelling grids. In addition, Superlead, a Reading Spelling computer program for Apple II. Proven to be effective with the learning disabled.

"Free Catalog"
LEAD Educational Resources, Inc.
144 Main St., N. Bridgewater, CT 06752
(203) 355-1516

NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES
381 Park Avenue South
Suite 1420
New York, NY 10016
(212) 545-7510 Fax (212) 545-9665

FEDERAL LAWS

The following is a listing of key Federal statutes that affect the education and civil rights of adults, children, and youth with disabilities.

PL 103-239—School-to-Work Opportunities Act (1994)

This act established a national framework to provide educational, career, and economic opportunities for all youth through partnerships among businesses, schools, community-based organizations, and state and local governments. It encouraged on-site training and work experiences that were integrated with school curricula.

PL 103-227—Goals 2000: Educate America Act (1994)

This law established a new framework for the Federal government to provide assistance to states for the reform of educational programs. It encouraged the establishment of high standards and specified eight National Educational Goals for all children.

PL 102-119—The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1991

This law addressed the needs of preschool children with disabilities and established funding for early intervention programs for children ages from birth to five years at risk for developmental delays. Target groups included low income, rural, minority, and other under-served populations.

PL 101-476—The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990

This law essentially replaced the landmark Education for All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142). It reauthorized and expanded previous funding programs, mandated that assistive technology needs and transition services be added to Individualized Education Programs (IEP), and added autism and Traumatic Brain Injury to the categorical listing of educationally handicapping conditions.

PL 101-336—The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990

This landmark legislation guaranteed equal opportunity and assured civil rights for all individuals with disabilities. This law mandated "reasonable accommodations" for individuals with disabilities in areas including employment, access to public facilities, transportation, telecommunication, and government services.

PL 101-127—The Children with Disabilities Temporary Care Reauthorization Act of 1989

Part of the Children's Justice Act (PL 99-401), this law included provisions to fund temporary child care (respite) for children with disabilities or chronic illness. It also provided for special care programs for children at risk for abuse and neglect and for crisis nurseries.

PL 100-407—The Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1988

This law assisted states in developing comprehensive programs for technology-related assistance and promoted the availability of technology to individuals with disabilities and their families.

PL 99-457—The Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1986

This law mandated services for preschoolers with disabilities and called for the development of statewide systems of early intervention services for infants and toddlers, birth to age three.

FEDERAL LAWS

PL 99-372—The Handicapped Children's Protection Act of 1986

This law provided for reimbursement of reasonable attorney's fees and costs incurred by parents/guardians who prevail in administrative hearings or in court during disputes with school systems regarding children's rights to special education and related services.

PL 98-524—The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984

This law assured that eligible individuals with special needs who apply for vocational education assistance be provided equal access to recruitment, enrollment, and placement.

PL 98-199—The Education of the Handicapped Act Amendments of 1983

This law established research and demonstration projects to facilitate the transition from school to work for youths with disabilities. It also established Parent Training and Information (PTI) centers and research programs in early intervention and early childhood special education.

PL 94-142—The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975

This law mandated free appropriate public education for all children with disabilities. It ensured due process rights, mandated education in the least restrictive environment, and required that students receiving special education services have Individualized Education Programs (IEP).

PL 93-380—The Education Amendments of 1974

This law was the first to mention the provision of an appropriate education for all children with disabilities. It also included the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (often called the Buckley Amendment) that gave parents and children the right to examine records kept in the students' school files.

PL 93-112—The Rehabilitation Act of 1973

This law provided for comprehensive services to all individuals, regardless of the severity of their disabilities. It also focused on adults and youth transitioning into employment settings. Its goal was to insure the development and implementation of a comprehensive and coordinated program of vocational assistance for individuals with disabilities, thereby supporting independent living and maximizing employability and integration into the community.

Section 504 of this Act required that the needs of individuals with handicaps be addressed as adequately as those of non-disabled persons. As a civil rights provision (rather than a funding law), this Act has been useful to parents seeking services and accommodations for children who are denied services under IDEA.

PL 89-750—The Elementary and Secondary Education Amendments of 1966

This law amended PL 89-10 and established the first grants for local-level programs. It established the Bureau of Education of the Handicapped (BEH) and the National Advisory Council (now called the National Council on Disability).

PL 89-313—The Elementary and Secondary Education Amendments of 1965

This Federal law authorized the first state-level grant program specifically for children and youth with disabilities.

PL 89-10—The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

This law was one of the first Federal commitments to the improvement of education. This Act and subsequent amendments authorized a multi-billion dollar aid program to assist states in providing school-based opportunities to children who were considered to be "educationally disadvantaged." ■

NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES
381 Park Avenue South
Suite 1420
New York, NY 10016
(212) 545-7510 Fax (212) 545-9665

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

INTRODUCTION

The National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) is pleased to provide our readers with an updated and expanded Resource List. Please feel free to duplicate and distribute these pages and to contact us with any suggestions for expanding this list. Many of the organizations listed can be visited on the Internet, and most will provide useful literature and recommendations for local resources at little or no cost.

While NCLD has found these to be excellent and reliable resources, we do not endorse any specific program, product, or organization.

CONTENTS

Introduction
National organizations on learning disabilities
Related organizations
Local advocacy and support
Continuing education
College resources
School testing issues
Employment and related issues
Legal issues
Government departments/agencies
Financial support
Summer camp resources
Information guides and directories
Gifted/LD
ADD/ADHD
Literacy
Homeschooling
Independent living
Technology resources
Books on tape
Bibliography
Journals
Video tapes and audio tapes
Additional resources available from NCLD's national Information & Referral Service

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON LEARNING DISABILITIES

SERVING ALL AGES

National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD): 381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420, New York, NY 10016. Telephone: 212/545-7510. National non-profit membership organization that offers a free Information & Referral Service, conducts educational programs, raises public awareness of LD, and advocates for improved legislation and services for those with learning disabilities.

Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA): 4156 Library Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234. Telephone: 412/341-1515. National non-profit membership organization, with state and local chapters, that conducts an annual conference and offers information and various publications.

Orton Dyslexia Society (ODS): Chester Building, 8600 La Salle Road, Suite 382, Baltimore, MD 21204. Telephone: 410/296-0232. International non-profit membership organization that offers training in language programs and provides publications relating to dyslexia. Chapters are located in most states.

Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589. Telephone: 703/620-3660 or 800/328-0272. CEC is a non-profit membership organization that has 17 specialized divisions. DLD is the division dedicated to LD. Both CEC and DLD provide free information and hold conferences.

Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD): P.O. Box 40303, Overland Park, KS 66204. Telephone:

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

913/492-8755. National membership organization dedicated to assisting professionals who work in the field of learning disabilities. *The Journal of Learning Disabilities* is available through CLD.

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC): 323 Chapel Street, #200, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7Z2 Canada. Telephone: 613/238-5721. Non-profit membership organization with provincial and territorial offices that conducts programs and provides information for LD children and adults. Resources include books and pamphlets that may be useful to U.S. residents.

National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD): National Institutes of Health (NIH), 6100 Executive Boulevard, Rockville, MD 20852. Telephone: 301/496-5733. Provides reviews of literature and information related to NICHD research.

National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY): P.O. Box 1492, Washington, DC 20013-1492. Telephone: 800/695-0285. Information clearinghouse that provides free information on disabilities and disability-related issues.

National Center for Law and Learning Disabilities (NCLLD): P.O. Box 368, Cabin John, MD 20818. Telephone: 301/469-8308. Non-profit organization that provides education, advocacy, analysis of legal issues, policy recommendations, and resource materials.

Parents' Educational Resource Center (PERC): 1660 South Amphlett Boulevard, Suite 200, San Mateo, CA 94402-2508. Telephone: 415/655-2410. Membership organization that conducts educational programs, publishes the quarterly Parent Journal newsletter, and offers information and referrals. PERC also maintains a library of books, articles, video and audio tapes, and recommended readings.

ADULT RESOURCES

HEATH Resource Center (Higher Education and Adult Training for People with Disabilities): One Dupont Circle, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: 202/939-9320 or 800/544-3284. National clearinghouse that provides free information on postsecondary education and related issues.

National Association for Adults with Special Learning Needs (NAASLN): P.O. Box 716, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010. Telephone: 610/525-8336 or 800/869-8336. Non-profit organization comprised of professionals, advocates, and consumers, whose purpose is to educate adults with special learning needs. Publishes a newsletter and holds annual conferences.

National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center (National ALLD Center): c/o Academy for Educational Development, 1875 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20009-1202. Telephone: 202/884-8185 or 800/953-2553. Non-profit organization established by the National Institute for Literacy that provides information regarding the impact of LD on literacy and offers technical assistance to practitioners in current best practices.

REBUS Institute: 1499 Bayshore Boulevard, Suite 416, Burlingame, CA 94010. Telephone: 415/697-7424. National non-profit research institute that studies and disseminates information on adult issues related to specific learning disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorder. Holds conferences and publishes a newsletter.

RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA): 10801 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852. Telephone: 800/638-8255. Membership organization comprised of speech/language pathologists and audiologists that provides information and referrals to the public on speech, lan-

guage, communication, and hearing disorders.

Association of Educational Therapists (AET): 14852 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 207, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403. Telephone: 818/788-3850. National membership organization that provides referrals to local educational therapists.

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC): 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589. Telephone: 703/264-9474 or 800/328-0272. Information clearinghouse funded by the Federal government and hosted by the Council for Exceptional Children.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): 1509 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-1426. Telephone: 800/424-2460. National membership organization that focuses on children from birth to age eight. Sponsors an annual conference, publishes a bi-monthly journal, and has a catalog of books, brochures, videos, and posters.

National Association of Private Schools for Exceptional Children (NAPSEC): 1522 K Street NW, Suite 1032, Washington, DC 20005. Telephone: 202/408-3338. Provides referral service for persons interested in private special education placements. Offers publications and sponsors annual conferences.

National Parent Network on Disabilities (NPND): 1727 King Street, Suite 305, Alexandria, VA 22314. Telephone: 703/684-6763. Membership organization open to all agencies, organizations, parent centers, parent groups, professionals, and individuals concerned with the quality of life for people with disabilities.

Division for Children's Communication Development (DCCD) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589. Telephone: 800/328-0272. One of seventeen divisions of the CEC. Provides information about communication disorders.

National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE): 1220 L Street, NW, Suite 605, Washington, DC 20005-4018. Telephone: 202/898-1829. Non-profit advocacy membership organization that provides literature including a newsletter and quarterly research journal.

National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Inc. (NASDSE): King Station I, 1800 Diagonal Road, Suite 320, Alexandria, VA 22314. Telephone: 703/519-3800. Not-for-profit corporation that promotes and supports educational programs for students with disabilities and holds annual meetings.

National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators (NCITE): 805 Lincoln, Eugene, OR 97401. Telephone: 503/683-7543. Organization that is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Dedicated to the improvement of instructional methods and materials. Publishes articles on educational practices.

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP): 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814. Telephone: 301/657-0270. International not-for-profit membership association of school psychologists. Provides a nationally recognized certification system, promotes children's rights, produces videos, and sponsors conferences. Publishes books, a newspaper, and the quarterly *School Psychology Review.*

LOCAL ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT

Parent Training and Information Project (PTI): Federation for Children with Special Needs, 95 Berkeley Street, #104, Boston, MA 02116. Telephone: 617/482-2915. Federally funded program that provides local resources and advocacy training for disability and special education issues.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

Parent to Parent: National Parent-to-Parent Support and Information System, P.O. Box 907, Blue Ridge, GA 30513. Telephone: 706/632-8822 or 800/651-1151. Program that matches parents with other parents based on the disabilities of their children.

Sibling Support Project: 4800 Sandpoint Way, NE, P.O. Box 5371, CL-09, Seattle, WA 98105-0371. Telephone: 206/368-4911. Organization for families that publishes a newsletter and holds support group meetings.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD - formerly AHSSPPE): P.O. Box 21192, Columbus, OH 43221-0192. Telephone: 614/488-4972. International organization that provides training programs, workshops, conferences, and publications.

The Higher Education Consortium for Special Education (HECSE): Department of Special Education, Room 100 Whitehead Hall, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD 21218. Telephone: 410/516-8273. Non-profit membership organization for colleges and universities that promotes the improvement of special education training programs.

The General Educational Development Testing Service (GEDTS): One Dupont Circle, Suite 250, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: 202/939-9490. Administers the GED exam and publishes information on disability-related accommodations.

Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies: US Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), Switzer Building, 330 C Street SW, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: 202/205-5465. These agencies can provide job training, counseling, financial assistance, and employment placement to individuals who meet eligibility criteria.

American Association for Vocational Instructional Materials (ASVIM): 220 Smithonia Road, Winterville, GA 30683. Telephone: 800/228-4689. Provides information on educational materials including a Performance Based Teacher Education catalog.

Learning Resources Network (LERN): 1550 Hayes Drive, Manhattan, KS 66502. Telephone: 800/678-5376. Provides information on adult continuing education.

COLLEGE RESOURCES

Dispelling the Myths: College Students and Learning Disabilities (by Katherine Garnett and Sandra La Porta, 1990). A monograph for students and educators that explains what learning disabilities are and what faculty members can do to help students with learning disabilities succeed in college. Available from NCLD. 212/545-7510.

Assisting College Students with Learning Disabilities: A Tutor's Manual (by Pamela Adelman and Debbie Olufs, 1990). Available from AHEAD. 614/488-4972.

The College Student with a Learning Disability: A Handbook (by Susan Vogel, 1985). An overview of college related issues, including information on Section 504 as it pertains to students with learning disabilities and college personnel. Available from LDA. 412/341-1515.

K & W Guide to Colleges for the Learning Disabled (by Marybeth Kravets and Imy Wax, 3rd Edition, 1995). Educators Publishing Service, Cambridge, MA. A state-by-state guide. Available from NCLD.

Peterson's Colleges with Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities (4th Edition, 1994). Peterson's Guides, Princeton, NJ. A state-by-state guide. Available from NCLD.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

SchoolSearch Guide to Colleges with Programs or Services for Students with Learning Disabilities (by Midge Lipkin, 1992). SchoolSearch Press, Belmont, MA. A state-by-state guide.

Unlocking Potential: College and Other Choices for Learning Disabled People: A Step-by-Step Guide (by Barbara Scheiber, 1992). Woodbine House, Bethesda, MD. A guide to post-secondary options.

SCHOOL TESTING ISSUES

Students with documented learning disabilities can apply for test accommodations as appropriate. For more information contact:

ACT Universal Testing: P.O. Box 4028, Iowa City, IA 52243-4028. Telephone: 319/337-1332.

Association on Higher Education and Disabilities (AHEAD): P.O. Box 21192, Columbus, OH 43221-0192. Telephone: 614/488-4972.

Educational Testing Service (ETS):
Rosedale Road, Princeton, NJ 08541.
Telephone: 609/921-9000.
Tests administered include: SAT, GRE, GMAT.

Law School Admission Council: P.O. Box 2000, Newtown, PA 18940-0098. Telephone: 215/968-1001. Tests administered include: LSAT, LSDAS.

GED Hotline: P.O. Box 81826, Lincoln, NE 68501. Telephone: 800/626-9433. 24-hour service that provides information on local GED classes and testing services. An accommodations guide for people with learning disabilities is available.

Educational Records Bureau: 345 East 47th Street, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10017. Telephone: 212/705-8888 or 800/989-3721. Students with documented LD who take the ERB tests for private schools can obtain accommodations as appropriate.

EMPLOYMENT AND RELATED ISSUES

RESOURCES

Job Accommodation Network: West Virginia University, P.O. Box 6080, Morgantown, WV 26506-6080. Telephone: 800/232-9675. International information network and consulting resource that answers questions about workplace accommodations, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Offers individualized information packets to employers, rehabilitation professionals, and persons with disabilities.

Mainstream Job Bank: 20 Signal Road, Stamford, CT 06902. Telephone: 800/296-1872. Matches individuals who have disabilities with prospective employers.

National Employment Council: 2020 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, #940, Washington, DC 20006. Telephone: 800/299-9039. Matches individuals who have disabilities with prospective employers.

Mainstream, Inc.: 3 Bethesda Metro Center, Suite 830, Bethesda, MD 20814. Telephone: 301/654-2400. Non-profit organization that works with employers and service providers to increase opportunities for persons with disabilities. Provides technical assistance on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC): 1801 L Street NW, Washington, DC 20507. Telephone: 800/663-4900. Key Federal agency for the implementation of Title I (employment) of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

PUBLICATIONS

Latham, P.S. & Latham, P.H. (1994). ***Succeeding in the Workplace.*** Washington, DC: JKL Communications.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

LDA of Canada (1993). ***Learning Disabilities and the Workplace.*** Ottawa, Ontario: LDA of Canada. Call LDAC at 613/238-5721.

Reisman, E. (1993). ***Guidelines for Supervising Employees with Learning Disabilities: A Manual for Employers.*** Cambridge, MA. Call NCLD at 212/545-7510.

Witt, M.A. (1992). ***Job Strategies for People with Disabilities.*** Princeton, NJ: Peterson's Guides.

LEGAL ISSUES

RESOURCES

American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law: 541 North Fairbanks, Chicago, IL 60611. Telephone: 800/285-2221. Provides information on legal issues and referrals to local Bar Associations.

National Association of Protection and Advocacy Systems: 900 Second Street NE, Suite 211, Washington, DC 20002. Telephone: 202/408-9514. Provides literature on legal issues and referrals to federally-mandated programs that advocate for the rights of people with disabilities.

ADA Information Hotline: The Great Lakes Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center. Telephone: 800/949-4232. Provides technical assistance and information regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act.

ADA Information Line (U.S. Department of Justice): Telephone: 202/514-0301 or 800/514-0301. Answers questions about Title II (public services) and Title III (public accommodations) of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Provides materials and technical assistance on the provisions of the ADA.

PUBLICATIONS

Latham, P.S. & Latham P.H. (1993). ***Learning Disabilities and the Law.*** Washington, DC: JKL Communications.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS/ AGENCIES

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS): U.S. Department of Education, Switzer Building, 330 C Street, SW, #3006, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: 202/205-5465. Contact OSERS for information about special education programs, vocational rehabilitation programs, and information about national and international research regarding disabilities and rehabilitation.

State Departments of Education: State Departments of Education can provide information about Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) implementation requirements and regulations. Contact directory assistance in your state capitol or NCLD for further information.

Office of Civil Rights (OCR) of the U.S. Department of Education: 330 C Street, SW, Washington, DC 20202-1100. Telephone: 202/205-5413. Contact OCR for information about how to file a formal civil rights complaint.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The following sources provide information about financial assistance. Additional sources may be available at local libraries.

Social Security Administration: 613-D, HHH Building, 2000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20201. Telephone: 800/772-1213. Provides financial assistance to those with disabilities who meet eligibility requirements.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

Federal Student Aid Information Center: P.O. Box 84, Washington, DC 20044. Telephone: 800/433-3243. Answers questions and produces several publications about financial aid.

Family Resource Center on Disabilities: 20 East Jackson Blvd., #900, Chicago, IL 60604. Telephone: 312/939-3513. Publishes the brochure *Tax Guide for Parents* that outlines many of the income tax deductions available to parents.

The Foundation Center: 79 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003. Telephone: 800/424-9836. Provides referrals to local centers for information regarding scholarships and grants.

SUMMER CAMP RESOURCES

The Advisory Service on Private Schools and Camps: 501 East Boston Post Road, Mamaroneck, NY 10543.
Telephone: 914/381-8096.
Provides detailed information about private schools and camps.

Learning Disabilities Association of America: 4156 Library Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234.
Telephone: 412/341-1515.
Publishes the *Summer Camp Directory*.

American Camping Association: 5000 State Road, 67 North, Martinsdale, IN 46151.
Telephone: 317/342-8456 or 800/428-2267.
Publishes the *Guide to Accredited Camps*.

National Camp Association: 610 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10185.
Telephone: 212/645-0653 or 800/966-CAMP.
Provides personalized guidance and referrals to sleep-away camps.

INFORMATION GUIDES AND DIRECTORIES

Exceptional Parent: The Magazine for Families and Professionals. Psy-Ed Corporation, 209 Harvard Street, Suite 303, Brookline, MA 02146-5005. Telephone: 800/562-1973 or 800/247-8080.

The Complete Learning Disabilities Directory. Grey House Publishing, Inc., Pocket Knife Square, Lakeville, CT 06039. Telephone: 800/562-2139.

Peterson's Private Secondary Schools. Peterson's, P.O. Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08543-2123. Telephone: 800/338-3282.

SchoolSearch Guide to Private Schools with Programs or Services for Students with Learning Disabilities. SchoolSearch Press, 127 Marsh Street, Belmont, MA 02178. Telephone: 617/489-5785.

GIFTED/LD

RESOURCES

The Association for the Gifted (TAG) of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589. Telephone: 800/328-0272. Membership organization that answers questions and provides information on education for the gifted.

ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education: The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1589. Telephone: 800/328-0272. Information clearinghouse that is funded by the Federal government and hosted by the Council for Exceptional Children.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC): 1707 L Street NW, Suite 550, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone: 202/785-4268. Membership advocacy organization that provides information to educators, administrators, and parents. Publishes a quarterly magazine for parents.

Hollingworth Center for Highly Gifted Children: P.O. Box 434, Portland, ME 04112-0434. Telephone: 207/655-3767. National membership organization that provides information and referrals. Publishes a quarterly newsletter and sponsors conferences.

Institute for the Academic Advancement of Youth: Johns Hopkins University, 3400 North Charles Court, Baltimore, MD 21218. Telephone: 410/516-0337.

Talent Identification Program: Duke University, 1121 West Main Street, Suite 100, Durham, NC 27701. Telephone: 919/683-1400.

Center for Talent Development: Northwestern University, 617 Dartmouth Place, Evanston,IL 60208. Telephone: 847/491-3782.

Rocky Mountain Talent Search: 2135 E. Wesley, Denver, CO 80208. Telephone: 303/871-2983.

PUBLICATIONS

Baum, S.M., Owen, S.V., & Dixon, J. (1991). ***To Be Gifted & Learning Disabled.*** Mansfield Center, CT: Creative Learning Press.

Center for Talented Youth (1994). ***The Gifted Learning Disabled Student.*** Baltimore, MD: CTY Publications and Resources, The Johns Hopkins University.

ADD/ADHD

RESOURCES

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder (CH.A.D.D.): 499 NW 70th Avenue, #308, Plantation, FL 33317. Telephone: 305/587-3700 or 800/233-4050. National non-profit membership organization that provides information, sponsors conferences, and holds meetings and support groups.

The Attention Deficit Information Network, Inc. (AD-IN): 475 Hillside Avenue, Needham, MA 02194. Telephone: 617/455-9895. Non-profit volunteer organization that offers information and holds support group meetings.

The National Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA): National Headquarters: 1070 Rosewood, Suite A, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Telephone: 313/769-6690 or 800/487-2282. National membership organization that provides referrals to local support groups, holds national conferences and symposiums, and offers materials on ADD and related issues.

ADDult Support Network: 20620 Ivy Place, Toledo, OH 43613. Volunteer organization that provides referrals to local support groups and offers information.

PUBLICATIONS

Alexander-Roberts, C. (1995). ***ADHD and Teens: A Parent's Guide to Making It Through the Teen Years.*** Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Company.

Barem, M. (1994). ***Hyperactivity and Attention Disorders in Children.*** San Ramon, CA: HIN, Inc.

CH.A.D.D. (1992). ***CH.A.D.D. Educator's Manual.*** Plantation, FL: CH.A.D.D.

Dendy, C.A.Z. (1995). ***Teenagers with ADD: A Parents' Guide.*** Bethesda, MD: Woodbine House.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

Greenberg, G.S. & Horn, W.F. (1991). ***Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: Questions and Answers for Parents.*** Champaign, IL: Research Press.

Hallowell, E.M. & Ratey, J. (1994). ***Driven to Distraction.*** New York, NY: Pantheon Books.

Hallowell, E.M. & Ratey, J. (1994). ***Answers to Distraction.*** New York, NY: Pantheon Books.

Jones, C.B. (1991). ***Sourcebook for Children with Attention Deficit Disorder: A Management Guide for Early Childhood Professionals and Parents.*** Tuscon, AZ: Communication Skill Builders.

Nadeau, K.G. (ed). (1995). ***A Comprehensive Guide to Attention Deficit Disorder in Adults: Research, Diagnosis, Treatment.*** New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel, Inc.

Parker, H. (1992). ***The ADD Hyperactivity Workbook for Schools.*** San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publications, Inc.

Parker, H. (1988). ***The ADD Hyperactivity Workbook for Parents, Teachers and Kids.*** San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publications, Inc.

Quinn, P.O. (1995). ***Adolescents and ADD: Gaining the Advantage.*** New York, NY: Magination Press.

Quinn, P.O. & Stern, J. (1991). ***Putting on the Brakes.*** New York, NY: Magination Press.

Quinn, P.O. & Stern, J. (1993). ***The "Putting on the Brakes" Activity Book for Young People with ADHD.*** New York, NY: Magination Press.

Rief, S.F. (1993). ***How to Reach and Teach ADD/ADHD Children.*** West Nyack, NY: The Center for Applied Research in Education.

LITERACY

Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA): 5795 Widewaters Parkway, Syracuse, NY 13214. Telephone: 315/445-8000. National non-profit organization that provides literacy opportunities for adults.

National Institute for Literacy (NIFL): 800 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20006. Telephone: 202/632-1500. Federal agency that provides leadership through advocacy, information sharing, and collaboration.

National Clearinghouse on ESL Literacy Education (NCLE): Center for Applied Linguistics, 1118 22nd Street NW, Washington, DC 20037. Telephone: 202/429-9292. Provides literacy education for adults and out-of-school youth who are learning English as a second language.

International Reading Association (IRA): 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139. Telephone: 302/731-1600. Non-profit membership organization that publishes journals for teachers, researchers, and professionals. A catalog of books, videos, and other materials is available.

HOMESCHOOLING

Homeschool Legal Defense Association: P.O. Box 159, Paeonian Springs, VA 22129. Telephone: 540/338-5600. Membership organization that offers legal assistance on homeschooling issues.

National Homeschool Association (NHA): P.O. Box 157290, Cincinnati, OH 45215-7290. Telephone: 513/772-9580. Non-profit membership organization that offers lists of support groups, magazines, books, and organizations.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Independent Living Research Utilization Program (ILRU): 2323 South Shepherd, Suite 1000, Houston, TX 77019. Telephone: 713/520-0232. National resource center that produces materials, develops and conducts training programs, and publishes a monthly newsletter.

National Council of Independent Living Programs (NCIL): 211 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 405, Arlington, VA 22210. Telephone: 703/525-3406. Cross-disability grassroots national organization that provides referrals to independent living facilities around the nation.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Information about adaptive technologies, computer hardware, and software applications may be obtained through local school districts, libraries, vendors, and on the Internet. For assistance, contact NCLD.

BOOKS ON TAPE

Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D): 20 Roszel Road, Princeton, NJ 08540. Telephone: 609/452-0606 or 800/221-4792. International non-profit organization that loans recorded and computerized books at all academic levels to people who cannot read standard print.

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLSBPH): Library of Congress, 1291 Taylor Street NW, Washington, DC 20542. Telephone: 800/424-8567. Provides books on tape to children and adults with learning disabilities. Contact your local library for further information.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS ABOUT LEARNING DISABILITIES AND RELATED TOPICS

Algozzine, B. & Ysseldyke, J. (eds.) (1995). ***Tactics for Improving Parenting Skills.*** Boston, MA: Sopris West.

Bloom, J. (1990). ***Help Me To Help My Child.*** Waltham, MA: Little Brown and Company.

Brooks, R. (1991). ***The Self-Esteem Teacher.*** Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service.

Brown, F.R., Aylward, E.H., & Keogh, B.K. (1992). ***Diagnosis and Management of Learning Disabilities: An Interdisciplinary/Lifestyle Approach.*** San Diego, CA: Singular Publishing Group, Inc.

Bryan, J. & Bryan, T. (1995). ***Amazing Discoveries: Social Science Experiments in the Middle School Classroom.*** Ann Arbor, MI: Exceptional Innovations, Inc.

Clarke, L. (1989). ***SOS: Help for Parents.*** KY: Parent Press.

Cohen, D.H., Stern, V., & Balaban, N. (1983). ***Observing and Recording the Behavior of Young Children (3rd edition).*** New York, NY: TC Press.

Cordoni, B. (1990). ***Living with a Learning Disability.*** Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.

Cramer, S.C.C. & Ellis, W. (eds.) (1996). ***Learning Disabilities: Lifelong Issues.*** Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Dane, E. (1990). ***Painful Passages: Working with Children with Learning Disabilities.*** Silver Spring, MD: NASW Press.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

Deshler, D., Ellis, E., & Lenz, K. (1996). ***Teaching Adolescents with Learning Disabilities.*** Denver, CO: Love Publishing Co.

Gall, M.D., Gall, J.P., Jacobsen, D.R., & Bullock, T.L. (1990). ***Tools for Learning: A Guide to Teaching Study Skills.*** Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Grey House Publishing (1994). ***The Complete Learning Disabilities Directory: A Comprehensive Guide to LD Resources.*** Lakeville, CT: Grey House Publishing.

Kozloff, M.A. (1994). ***Improving Educational Outcomes for Children with Disabilities: Principles for Assessment, Program Planning, and Evaluation.*** Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Learning Disabilities Council, Inc. (1991). ***Understanding Learning Disabilities: A Parent Guide and Workbook.*** Richmond, VA: Learning Disabilities Council, Inc.

Lerner, J. (1993). ***Learning Disabilities: Theories, Diagnosis, and Teaching Strategies (6th edition).*** Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Levine, M. (1993). ***All Kinds of Minds.*** Cambridge, MA: Educators Publishing Services, Inc.

Levine, M. (1990). ***Keeping A Head in School.*** Cambridge, MA: Educators Publishing Service, Inc.

Levine, M. (1987). ***Developmental Variation and Learning Disorders.*** Cambridge, MA: Educators Publishing Services, Inc.

Levine, M. (1994). ***Educational Care.*** Cambridge, MA: Educators Publishing Service, Inc.

Lyon, G.R. (1996). ***Neuroimaging: A Window to the Neurological Foundations of Learning and Behavior in Children.*** Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Lyon, G.R. & Krasnegor, N.A. (1996). ***Attention, Memory, and Executive Function.*** Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Lyon, G.R. (ed). (1994). ***Frames of Reference for the Assessment of Learning Disabilities: New Views on Measurement Issues.*** Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Lyon, G.R. (ed). (1993). ***Better Understanding Learning Disabilities: New Views from Research and Their Implications for Education and Public Policies.*** Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Nadeau, K.G. (1994). ***Survival Guide for College Students with ADD or LD.*** New York, NY: Magination Press.

Nosek, K. (1995). ***The Dyslexic Scholar: Helping Your Child Succeed in the School System.*** Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing.

Novick, B.Z. & Arnold, M.M. (1991). ***Why is My Child Having Trouble at School? A Parent's Guide to Learning Disabilities.*** New York, NY: Villard Books.

Osman, B.B. (in press). ***Learning Disabilities: A Family Affair. (revised edition).*** New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Osman, B.B. & Blinder, H. (1995). ***No One to Play With: The Social Problems of LD and ADD Children.*** Novato, CA: Academic Therapy Press.

Putnam, J.W. (1993). ***Cooperative Learning and Strategies for Inclusion.*** Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

Sedita, J. (1989). ***The Landmark Study Skills Guide.*** Prides Crossing, MA: Landmark School (also available in Spanish).

Silver, L.B. (1991). ***The Misunderstood Child: A Guide for Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities. (2nd edition).*** New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Smith, S.L. (1996). ***No Easy Answers: The Learning Disabled Child at Home and at School.*** New York, NY: Bantam.

Smith, S.L. (1994). ***Different is Not Bad, Different is the World: A Book About Learning Disabilities.*** Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Spafford, C.S. & Grosser, G.S. (1996). ***Dyslexia: Research and Resource Guide.*** Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Stevens, S.H. (1991). ***Classroom Success for the Learning Disabled.*** Winston-Salem, NC: Blair.

Turnbull, H.R., III. (1994). ***Free Appropriate Public Education.*** Denver, CO: Love Publishing Co.

Vail, P. (1992). ***Learning Styles: Food for Thought and 130 Practical Tips.*** Rosemont, NJ: Modern Learning Press - Programs for Education.

West, T.G. (1991). ***In the Mind's Eye.*** Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books.

PERSONAL STORIES ABOUT LEARNING DISABILITIES AND RELATED TOPICS

Corcoran, J. & Carlson, C.C. (1994). ***The Teacher Who Couldn't Read.*** Colorado Springs, CO: Focus on the Family.

Hampshire, S. (1982). ***Susan's Story.*** New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Kelly, K. & Ramundo, P. (1993). ***You Mean I'm Not Lazy, Stupid, or Crazy?!*** Cincinnati, OH: Tyrell & Jerem Press.

Lelewer, N. (1994). ***Something's Not Right: One Family's Struggle with Learning Disabilities.*** Acton, MA: VanderWyk & Burnham.

Murphy, S.T. (1992). ***On Being LD: Perspectives and Strategies for Young Adults.*** New York, NY: TC Press.

Schmitt, A. (1992). ***Brilliant Idiot: An Autobiography of a Dyslexic.*** Intercouse, PA: Good Books.

Tuttle, C. & Tuttle, G.A. (1995). ***Challenging Voices: Writings By, For, and About People with Learning Disabilities.*** Los Angeles, CA: Lowell House.

BOOKS FOR AND ABOUT CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Blue, R. (1979). ***Me and Einstein Breaking Through the Reading Barrier.*** NY: Human Sciences Press.

DeClements, B. (1985). ***Sixth Grade Can Really Kill You.*** New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.

Dunn, K.B. & Dunn, A.B. (1993). ***Trouble with School: A Family Story with Learning Disabilities.*** Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing.

Fullen, D. (1993). ***Lessons Learned: Students with Learning Disabilities Share What They've Discovered About Life and Learning.*** Columbus, OH: Mountain Books.

Galvin, M. (1995). ***Otto Learns About His Medicine.*** New York, NY: Magination Press.

Gehret, J. (1996). ***The Don't Give Up Kid.*** Fairport, NY: Verbal Images Press.

Hughes, S. (1990). ***Ryan - A Mother's Story of Her Hyperactive/Tourette Syndrome Child.*** Duarte, CA: Hope Press.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

Janover, C. (1988). ***Josh: A Boy with Dyslexia.*** Burlington, VT: Waterfront Books.

Kline, S. (1985). ***Herbie Jones.*** New York, NY: Puffin Books.

Moss, D.M. (1989) ***Shelly the Hyperactive Turtle.*** Rockville, MD: Woodbine House, Inc.

Moss, R.A. & Dunlap, H.H. (1990). ***Why Johnny Can't Concentrate: Coping with Attention Deficit Problems.*** USA: Bantam Books.

Philbrick, W.R. (1993). ***Freak the Mighty.*** New York, NY: Scholastic, Inc.

Roby, C. (1994). ***When Learning is Tough: Kids Talk About Their Learning Disabilities.*** Morton Grove, IL: Alberter Whitman and Company.

JOURNALS

Journal of Learning Disabilities
Remedial and Special Education
Journal of Special Education
Pro-Ed.
8700 Shoal Creek Blvd.
Austin, TX 78757-6897
512/451-3246

The DLD Times
Exceptional Children
Teaching Exceptional Children
The Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589
800/232-7323

Annals of Dyslexia
The Orton Dyslexia Society
Chester Building, Suite 302
8000 LaSalle Road
Baltimore, MD 21286-2044
410/296-0232

LDA Newsletter
Learning Disabilities Association of America
4156 Library Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15234
412/341-1515

Learning Disabilities: Research and Practice
Lawrence Earlbaum Associates
365 Broadway
Hillsdale, NJ 07642
201/666-4110

Learning Disabilities Quarterly
LD Forum
Council for Learning Disabilities
PO Box 40303
Overland Park, KS 66204
913/492-8755

VIDEO TAPES AND AUDIO TAPES

Every Child is Learning: A 45-minute video with accompanying manual to help parents, teachers, and early care providers recognize early warning signs for language and learning disabilities. Produced by NCLD. Contact: NCLD, 381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420, New York, NY 10016. Telephone: 212/545-7510.

We Can Learn: Understanding and Helping Children with Learning Disabilities: A 50-minute videotape, with accompanying manual, for parents, teachers, and professionals about children with LD. Produced by NCLD and WNBC, New York. $39.95 + $3.95 postage and handling. Contact: NCLD, 381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420, New York, NY 10016. Telephone: 212/545-7510.

Gifts of Greatness: A one-hour musical/drama video highlighting the lives of well-known people with dyslexia, starring Ed Asner, Danny Thomas, and others. $25.00 + $3.00 handling. Contact: Educators Publishing Service, 75 Moulton Street, Cambridge, MA 02138. Telephone: 800/225-5750.

NCLD'S RESOURCE LIST

Homework and Learning Disabilities: A 34-minute video offering techniques for handling homework problems. Helps to clarify the roles of teachers, students, and parents. $295.00, $50.00 rental. Contact: Altschul Group Corp., 1560 Sherman Ave., #100, Evanston, IL 60201. Telephone: 800/345-6036.

How Difficult Can This Be? F.A.T. CITY: A video by Rick Lavoie that explores the difficulties faced by children with learning disabilities. $49.95 + $5.00 shipping and handling. Contact: CACLD, 18 Marshall St., South Norwalk, CT 06854. Telephone: 203/838-5010.

I'm Not Stupid: A 53-minute video that provides an overview of the nature of learning disabilities in children and adults. $22.00 (postage and handling included). Contact: Learning Disabilities Association (LDA), 4156 Library Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15234. Telephone: 412/341-1515.

Last One Picked...First One Picked On: (Parent and teacher versions) A video by Rick Lavoie that addresses the social problems of children with learning disabilities. Offers practical solutions for teachers and parents. $49.95 + $8.50 shipping and handling. Contact: Public Broadcasting Service. Telephone: 800/344-3337.

LD Stories: Lab School Day School: A 7-minute animated videotape by Lab School students about what it is like to have learning disabilities. For more information, contact The Lab School of Washington. Telephone: 202/965-6600.

Lab School Audio Series: A collection of audiotapes featuring twelve programs from The Lab School Lecture Series for parents and professionals. Topics include: social problems of children with LD, controversies about ADD and treatment, and parenting with confidence. For a complete listing and more information, contact The Lab School of Washington. Telephone: 202/965-6600.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM NCLD'S NATIONAL INFORMATION & REFERRAL SERVICE

Information on these and other topics is available free of charge:

Learning Disabilities: General Information
Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
Adults with Learning Disabilities
College Issues (including a Financial Aid Information packet)
Current Research Findings
Inclusion
Juvenile Delinquency and Learning Disabilities
The Evaluation Process
Choosing the Right School
Legal Rights of Children and Youth who have Learning Disabilities
Dyscalculia (Difficulty with Mathematics)
Dysgraphia (Difficulty with Written Expression)
Dyspraxia (Difficulty with Motor Planning)
Dyslexia (Difficulty with Reading and Language)
Giftedness and Learning Disabilities
Social Skills and Self-Esteem
Reprint Series for Parents
Reprint Series for Teachers
NCLD's Tips (several one-page tips for parents and teachers)
NCLD's National Summit Report (1994)
Technology and Computer Software
Visual and Auditory Processing Disorders

Contact NCLD for listings of private schools, colleges, clinics, programs, summer camps, and other sources of help from our resource database.

PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO BECOME AN NCLD MEMBER OR RENEW YOUR NCLD MEMBERSHIP!!

National Center for Learning Disabilities
381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420
New York, New York 10016
Telephone: 212/545-7510
Fax: 212/545-9665 ■

NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES
381 Park Avenue South
Suite 1420
New York, NY 10016
(212) 545-7510 Fax (212) 545-9665

NCLD TIPS

PARENTS: HELPING YOURSELF AND YOUR CHILD

Parents of children with learning disabilities are faced with many challenges. These challenges can be emotional, intellectual, and even financial. Parents must become knowledgeable about the educational assessment process, special education services, and education law. They must also master a new vocabulary that enables them to work cooperatively with clinicians and school personnel. All of these challenges can contribute to pressures that upset the family equilibrium. The following TIPS may help parents to meet these challenges more successfully, support school success, and promote quality family time.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE PROBLEM

Acknowledgement begins with understanding. As children's first teachers and role models, parents have a unique perspective from which to understand and report strengths, weaknesses, interests, and patterns of learning and development.

- Pay close attention to your child's behavior, especially as it relates to school and learning related issues.
- Be prepared to share information about the nature and scope of any problems or concerns (be specific!).
- Gather information from others who work with your child. Try to keep an open mind and avoid becoming overwhelmed, frightened, or adversarial. The more meaningful information you can collect from a variety of perspectives, the better an advocate you will be during any decision making process.

FINDING INFORMATION

Finding accurate information depends upon knowing what questions to ask and to whom they should be addressed. The language of special education can be confusing, and parents should request clarification of terms and ask that any recommended educational practices or interventions be explained.

- Seek assistance from the proper school district personnel; learn how to request services, accommodations, evaluations, and initiate meetings or facilitate communication among those involved in your child's education.
- As appropriate, seek help from qualified professionals outside of the school system: tutors, educational therapists, psychologists, social workers, speech/language pathologists, and occupational and physical therapists.
- Organize your questions and concerns; be ready to address sensitive issues; try to anticipate questions and concerns that might be raised by others in the decision-making process.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of all those who are involved in your child's education; understand the routines and expectations set for classroom participation, and identify key personnel (resource room teacher, teaching assistant) who will be able to monitor progress and provide feedback on a regular basis.
- Do not rely on hearsay or on someone else's past experience; every student's situation is unique and should be considered individually.

PARENTS: HELPING YOURSELF AND YOUR CHILD

■ Beware of what you hear or read in the media; educational issues in general, and learning disabilities specifically, receive a lot of attention from the press. Controversy about legislation, medication, special education practices, and teacher training and certification are common. Verify information with reliable sources.

■ Know your rights; become familiar with your entitlements and the protections that are granted under Federal and state law. Evaluation procedures, the individualized educational planing process (IEP, IFSP), and the delivery of educational services are all carefully regulated. Remember that parents and school district personnel are equal partners in educational planning, and are bound by the same mandate—to afford every child the benefits of appropriate educational opportunities.

BECOMING AN ADVOCATE

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in all aspects of educational planning. Be familiar with the rights and safeguards (due process) incorporated into law which assure your access to and participation in educational decision-making.

■ Enlist the help of others who might be able to assist in planning or in decision making; this includes any care-givers, professionals, or friends who can provide information or support.

■ Children should be helped to understand the nature of their disability, the types of strategies and accommodations that might be helpful, and how to seek assistance in meeting their specific needs.

■ Parents should encourage children to believe in their own potential and to be aware of their areas of relative strength and weakness. This will promote their ability to be academically and socially successful and to become better self-advocates.

■ Realistic expectations should be set; matching children's interests and abilities with the resources available in school and in the community will greatly enhance progress.

■ Parents, teachers, and children should be ready to face frustrations and unexpected challenges; don't allow discouragement to undermine your hard work! Progress and change are sometimes slow in coming, but with creativity, flexibility, determination, and commitment, positive outcomes are often achieved.

GETTING SUPPORT

■ Parent support groups can be great sources of information and emotional support.

■ Networking with other parents and professionals can also be helpful. Many organizations provide support, training and information to parents. Some groups help parents locate other parents with similar concerns.

■ Attorneys, educational advocates, representatives from educational organizations, teachers, other school personnel and parents are all potential sources of useful information. ■

ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND THE WORKPLACE

Adults with learning disabilities (LD) often face unique challenges in the workplace. Individuals with LD can overcome these challenges and sustain rewarding and fulfilling employment.

BEFORE THE JOB SEARCH BEGINS

Searching for employment can be a long and difficult process. Success in the workplace begins with careful decision making.

- Match your interests with job prospects; look for openings in familiar disciplines that will sustain your attention and keep you motivated.
- Identify tasks on the job that you would find rewarding (research, physical labor, interacting with others); look for positions in these areas.
- Identify skills (typing, filing, managing, supervising, organizing) that can contribute to success.
- Consider your personality traits (outgoing, warm, shy) when choosing work; evaluate if the work setting is conducive to your needs.
- Be sensitive to your work values (working hard, helping others, maximizing free time) and be sure that they coincide with the job requirements and are consistent with those of co-workers.

BEGINNING YOUR JOB SEARCH

Interviews, resumés and applications are perhaps the most important elements in searching for a job. Potential employers often rely upon initial impressions when evaluating candidates.

- Avoid common mistakes on resumés and applications; read instructions carefully; be sure that all letters, resumés, and applications are thoroughly proof-read; submit only materials that are neat and easy to read; sign and date forms as requested; answer the questions!
- Be prompt to appointments; allow for unexpected delays in travel.
- Dress appropriately; as a general rule, formal business attire is recommended.
- Bring copies of materials with you; the person conducting the interview may not have a complete set of materials, and you may wish to refer to a document during your meeting.
- Be realistic about salary level and benefits; provide information about prior employment and speak openly about successes and frustrations.
- Seek information about potential employers before an interview; try to speak with someone who works for the firm or in the same industry.
- During the interview, be sure to emphasize your strengths as potential assets on the job.

DISCLOSING A DISABILITY

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), qualified job candidates can perform essential work functions. Additionally, candidates with disabilities may not be disqualified or subjected to discrimination by virtue of their need for reasonable accommodations.

Employers must consider disability status only as it pertains to your ability to perform essential job functions. Information about the disability must be kept confidential and must not be disclosed without your explicit (written) consent.

You are assured of certain rights during interviews. For more specific information, contact your local government office or the U.S. Department of Justice, ADA Information Line 800/514-0301.

SEEKING ACCOMMODATIONS

The ADA requires that reasonable accommodations be provided to individuals with disabilities. Such accommodations include job modifications, changes in the physical environment, or access to equipment that facilitates successful job performance. You are encouraged to explain to the employer how your disability may affect your performance of required job duties; request accommodations that will allow you to successfully perform those essential functions.

The employer is not required to provide accommodations if doing so would cause undue hardship (considering the overall financial and personnel resources of the firm).

Examples of accommodations include:

- modifying work schedules,
- acquiring or modifying equipment,
- providing auxiliary aids and services,
- restructuring job tasks,
- modifying examinations, providing additional or alternative training. ■

PARENTS AS ADVOCATES

Many parents, upon discovering that their child has a learning disability, become anxious (or even angry), and wonder what they can do. Gathering information, networking with others (parents and professionals), and becoming advocates are ways for parents to help children reach their potential.

KNOW YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS

■ When parents and school personnel suspect the presence of an educationally handicapping condition, Federal law offers children and parents a wide range of guarantees including the right to a free evaluation and the provision of appropriate services or accommodations in the least restrictive settings.

BECOME INVOLVED WITH THE SCHOOL

Regular and ongoing communication with your child's teacher is an important way to monitor progress and to insure that concerns are addressed in a timely manner.

■ Be sure to share your own observations with teachers; knowing more about your child's strengths, weakness, and behaviors at home can provide a valuable framework for teachers to understand behaviors observed at school.

■ Maintaining open avenues of communication with school personnel reinforces the message to both your child and to school staff that your child's education is of great importance; it also affirms your willingness to be an active partner in your child's school career.

MODIFICATIONS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Once your child is identified as having a learning disability, a number of services can be provided. These provisions are meant to equalize opportunities, and to assure that appropriate educational opportunities are afforded to your child, and not to lower academic standards.

Whether or not your child qualifies for special education services, you are encouraged to meet with teachers to identify (and if possible, to implement) helpful modifications or changes in classroom routines. Be sure that your decision to ask for a particular accommodation is based solely on your child's need. Informal accommodations might include:

■ have written information read aloud (from the board or from texts and hand-out materials)

■ allow extra time for exams (as needed)

■ have the teacher suggest ways for your child to ask questions (as many as needed) and to request clarification without interrupting lessons

■ if written expression is an area of weakness, encourage teachers to meet with your child after written exams and have them explain answers verbally (this must be done tactfully)

■ arrange for your child to tape-record classes or listen to printed materials on tape (if helpful)

■ have your child use a work organizer (calendar/planner) to help keep track of assignments and dates, and to facilitate communication between home and school personnel.

LISTEN TO YOUR CHILD

Whether or not children go bounding off to school in the morning, their feelings about school may provide valuable insights about the level of difficulty, ease, and satisfaction with which they experience school. Frequent complaints of boredom or illness (headaches, stomach aches) often mask other school difficulties.

LEARN ABOUT LEARNING DISABILITIES

Read as much as you can about LD and related issues. Visit your library or call NCLD for a variety of free articles from our Information and Referral Service. (Note: Beware of what you read or hear in the media! When in doubt, verify reports with reliable expert sources.)

SEEK SUPPORT

Information, guidance and support are available through a wide network of agencies, organizations, and informal parent networks. Contact your State Education Department and local school district for printed material about regulations that exist under state or local law. Advocacy organizations and support groups (national, local) can provide personal comfort as well as information about your rights and available resources. ■

EARLY WARNING SIGNS

Early intervention can make a substantial difference for children with learning disabilities (LD). While parents are advised to be concerned about the potential risk of mislabeling, early attention and careful observation reduce this risk and ensure that real concerns do not go unnoticed.

CONSIDER MEDICAL ISSUES

■ Children who have ingested lead-based paint are at significant risk for learning delays. Maternal substance abuse, low birth weight, cigarette smoking, and poor nutrition are all associated with early risk for language and learning disorders.

OBSERVE AND RECORD BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS

One of the most consistent features of children with learning disabilities is an unevenness in development. These differences are often most pronounced in preschool and school-age children with LD. However, parents and teachers should not make hasty judgements because developmental variations exist among all children.

Examples of at-risk behaviors include:

■ **Language:** Slow development of speech; difficulty learning new vocabulary or naming familiar items; uses two or three word phrases instead of strings of words; speech is difficult to understand; does not seem to understand directions or questions; difficulty expressing wants or needs; trouble following even simple directions;

■ **Motor:** Difficulty manipulating small objects (using pencil/crayon); poor balance; awkwardness with jumping, running or climbing; poor sense of personal space;

■ **Social:** Difficulty with (or disinterest in) peer socialization; overly aggressive or withdrawn; sudden and extreme mood changes; frequent crying or tantrums; poor frustration tolerance;

■ **Cognitive:** Difficulty understanding cause and effect; problems with sequencing and one-to-one correspondence; difficulty with basic concepts (size, shape, color);

■ **Self-Help:** Difficulty with washing, dressing, self-feeding;

■ **Attention:** Easily distracted; acts impulsively; displays poor organizational skills.

SEEK AN EVALUATION/KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

If parents observe multiple areas of delays or suspect a problem that will compromise learning, they can request that their child be evaluated. Contact your local school for information about how to arrange for a multi-disciplinary evaluation.

Parents can consent to have evaluations done at public expense or can seek independent testing and share reports with school personnel. Parents should be actively involved in each step of the evaluation process.

CHECK CREDENTIALS AND ASK QUESTIONS

When seeking evaluation services, ask about the person's background and training. Parents, teachers, and evaluation personnel should share information throughout the testing process.

■ Don't be afraid of "testing"; more information about your child's learning profile will better enable you to plan for educational success.

■ Having your child evaluated does not mean that you agree with the findings or consent to any recommendations; testing is one of the formal steps used to gather information. Interventions can be implemented only with parental consent.

■ Once testing is completed, school personnel and parents must meet to discuss findings and, if appropriate, formulate an Individualized Education Program (IEP); be an active participant to insure that your child's needs will be met.

A FEW WAYS TO HELP

■ Read with your child following along or listening without looking at the text, tracking along the page with a finger; and read, read, read!

■ Play rhyming games or games where your child has to guess the name of an item from verbal cues; sing songs; make up your own lyrics.

■ Look for patterns of strength and encourage activities that promote skill and confidence.

■ Explore alternative ways to accomplish frustrating tasks.

■ Become knowledgeable about your child's daily activities and routines; make adaptations that promote success and self-sufficiency.

■ Visit the library or ask your child's pediatrician about different stages of development. ■

EFFECTIVE PARENT-TEACHER PARTNERSHIPS

All too often, parents and teachers find themselves embroiled in disagreements about how best to help children with special learning needs. Children are always winners when teachers and parents work together effectively. This partnership will insure that problems can be addressed quickly and that the needs of parents, school personnel, and students are reflected in any decision-making process.

A wonderful first step in building this relationship is the parent-teacher conference. Such a meeting, held at the beginning of the school semester, can enable parents and teachers to overview hopes and expectations for the academic year and to overcome potential barriers to communication. Equally important is to create a plan for regular and ongoing contact that will insure that concerns are addressed before they turn into problems.

1. The key to any successful partnership is to establish a relationship of mutual respect and appreciation. An occasional note, informal meeting, or conversation can go a long way toward fostering a productive relationship.

2. By agreeing upon a system for regular and ongoing communication, parents and teachers can best monitor progress and address unexpected needs in a timely manner. Parents and teachers should agree upon a "best time" to meet or speak, or choose to communicate in writing.

3. Parents are well advised to learn about the system within which teachers must do their job and that sometimes compromises their ability to pay closer attention to students with special needs. Parents are encouraged to ask how they can help teachers to overcome obstacles and to promote positive change.

4. Teachers can help parents become active partners in supporting learning by sharing information about class routines. Notifying parents about grading criteria, homework and test schedules, projects, and class trips is very useful, as is establishing guidelines for ways in which parents can help with checking work and studying.

5. Parents should inform teachers about possible factors at home that either pose obstacles to learning or that might enhance the teacher's effectiveness in the classroom. Family stressors and a student's participation in extra-curricular activities might impact upon school performance.

6. Teachers should inform parents about rules and regulations for the classroom as well as the school community. Parents might be asked to provide feedback regarding behavioral expectations and discipline guidelines at the onset of the school year.

7. Parents may not always be able to assess the workings of the classroom from homework assignments and test grades. Teachers should provide parents with an overview of content area instruction and teaching style. Parents should seek information about classroom routines.

8. Parents are "experts" when it comes to their own children. By providing information to teachers about past positive (and negative) school experiences, teachers can take advantage of what is already known to be good practice with these children. Parents should highlight activities that have been successful in increasing motivation and improving performance. Mention situations that have caused frustration and resulted in underachievement or inappropriate behavior.

9. Just as students are unique learners, parents and teachers have unique characteristics and styles of working with children.

10. Parents and teachers should remind each other that one way to promote success in school is to insure that students feel "special" about their learning. Children should be praised for even small successes. Efforts should be made to afford children opportunities to be increasingly self-sufficient and to maintain high expectations for school success. ■

THE IEP - TIPS FOR PARENTS

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a management tool for guiding a child's special education program. It provides ongoing opportunities for students, parents, and educators to collaborate as equal participants in identifying needs, providing for those needs, and anticipating and monitoring outcomes. It is a document that should be revised as the needs of a child changes, and should serve as the focal point for clarifying issues and for making cooperative decisions. As a written commitment of the resources the school agrees to provide, this document should be specific in communicating a child's instructional and technology needs, and should affirm the commitment of the school to meeting those needs. As such, the IEP is the cornerstone of a child's special education program.

The process of developing an IEP is one that can greatly enhance communication among students, parents, and school personnel. The following points may be helpful in allowing parents to become partners in the IEP process.

PRIOR TO THE MEETING

■ Clarify your child's present level of educational performance. Make a list of your child's strengths and your concerns relative to school (e.g. reading, writing, math, organization, behavior, self-advocacy, communication, mobility, social-emotional skills). Include your child in this process; the student's perspective is a critical ingredient for successful planning.

■ List some future goals for your child. This will provide a framework for decision making throughout your child's school career. Once again, be sure to include your child in these discussions.

■ Determine what you hope to have accomplished during the next year. This becomes the basis upon which you will recommend annual IEP goals for your child. Try to prioritize your list—some skill areas may need to be addressed with more urgency than others.

■ Contact the school and ask whether a draft IEP is being provided. If so, request a copy. This will enable you to become familiar with the IEP format and to preview what the school is proposing. You should also share your ideas with school personnel prior to the IEP meeting. This will allow for open discussion during the meeting and will ensure that your wishes and perspective are considered during the development of the IEP.

Anyone may attend the IEP meeting with you (friend, relative, advocate); let the school know if you plan to bring anyone. The school must inform you whom they have invited to participate in the development of your child's IEP.

AT THE IEP MEETING

■ The IEP committee must decide upon desired outcomes and instructional goals and objectives. Each objective has an evaluation procedure, schedule, and mastery criterion that will allow you to monitor progress over time. If this meeting is to review the current IEP, your first step is to review the current IEP's goals and objectives to determine the progress your child has made. This will assist the IEP committee in determining your child's present level of educational performance.

■ Make sure that the present level of educational performance as listed on the IEP contains an accurate description of your child's current functioning and a summary of how your child's disability impacts his/her education. This should be written in a way that is understandable to you. Ask for explanations and request to have things written in jargon-free language. All test scores included should be self-explanatory and, if not, explanations should be provided.

■ After a present level of educational performance has been agreed upon, ask the IEP committee to discuss where your child may be in three to four years. Try to articulate the "big picture." For the middle-to-high school student, dis-

THE IEP - TIPS FOR PARENTS

cussion should include planning for the transition from high school into post-secondary educational or employment settings.

■ Once current status and future plans have been discussed, the task of setting annual goals should begin. Each annual goal should be reviewed before short-term specific objectives are presented. This will insure that all major areas of concern are considered. Remember that annual goals are statements of what your child can reasonably be expected to accomplish during the duration of the IEP.

■ Annuals goals should be specific to your child's needs and should be stated in terms of observable and measurable behaviors. If you suspect that goals are too general, ask "What do I expect my child to be able to do? How will I know when this goal has been reached?"

■ Short term objectives are the intermediate steps between the present level of educational performance and the annual goal. These objectives should be clearly written and each one must have an agreed-upon evaluation criterion, procedures, and schedule for attainment.

■ A discussion of any needed accommodations and modifications should take place. Requests should be made for the provision of supplementary aids and services necessary to assist your child in special and general education settings. These may include changes in instruction and assessment, adaptive equipment and/or assistive technology devices. Recommendations should be clearly stated in the IEP.

■ It is very important that the IEP committee discuss how, where, and for how long services will be provided. As appropriate, plans for transition services should be included. Be sure that everything is written in clear language.

The IEP doesn't have to be completed in one meeting, and can be revised at any time. You may request that the IEP committee reconvene to discuss concerns and make revisions as needed.

■ Before the close of an IEP meeting, be sure to acknowledge the efforts of all participants and remind them that you are a willing participant in the support process. Also, convey your expectation that, at the next IEP review, the first order of business will be to discuss your child's current IEP, with special attention to the specific goals and objectives listed.

AFTER THE IEP MEETING

Stay informed and be actively involved in your child's education. Use the IEP to monitor your child's program and progress. Several suggestions include:

■ Talk to your child about school; review homework assignments; note time needed for completion; track how much assistance is required for different formats; keep written, dated notes about your child's comments, complaints, impressions; keep samples of your child's school work.

■ Keep in close contact with school support personnel: speak with teachers, tutors, and therapists on a regular basis, and encourage them to communicate specific concerns; ask about tests and grading procedures; be sure that all stakeholders are working toward an integrated model of support; share comments, observations, and suggestions with teachers; you might use a traveling notebook between home and school on a weekly basis

The IEP process demands hard work, time, and collaboration among students, parents, and school personnel. For additional information or support, contact a local parents' resource center or call one of the disability organizations in your area. ■

GENERAL TIPS FOR BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

Learning disabilities often result in experiences of repeated failure and frustration. Cycles of unrewarded effort can erode self-confidence and result in low self-esteem. Parents and professionals can assist by creating a positive mind set, providing tools and strategies for self-improvement, and fostering a caring and supportive environment.

1. Children should be helped to set realistic goals.
   - Parents and children should share a common set of expectations.
   - Judge the behavior ("you shouldn't break the toy") not the child ("you are bad").

2. Give your child frequent, positive feedback.
   - Break activities into small steps; clarify language and demonstrate tasks as needed.
   - Create lists of steps to guide longer tasks.

3. Show your appreciation.
   - A gesture or kind word reinforces helping behavior and good feelings.
   - All children need and deserve to be loved; be a good listener, empathize with failures, acknowledge frustrations, and rejoice in successes.

4. Constructive criticism works best.
   - Research has suggested that much of what teachers and parents say to children is critical; feedback should acknowledge good effort and address areas of suggested improvement. ("The report is terrific. Your illustrations are wonderful; let's take another look at the reference section.")

5. Accentuate the positive.
   - Focusing on your child's strengths will help to keep motivation levels high.
   - Helping your child capitalize on special talents and interests will boost enthusiasm and pride; nothing builds self-esteem like success.

6. Frustration is not all bad.
   - Allowing your child to experience some frustration is critical to learning; don't come to the rescue with a "quick fix;" help explore options.
   - It may be hard for a child to think of alternative approaches to tasks once frustration has set in; explore repair strategies before beginning tasks to decrease anxiety and promote perseverance.

7. Family matters.
   - Acknowledge your child's important status in the family.
   - A child's self-worth can be greatly enhanced by being included in decision-making ("What color sofa do you think we should buy?").

8. Common courtesy and manners are important.
   - Explain how to accept a compliment.
   - Encourage preferred language (avoid words like "yup, nope, uh-uh").

9. Self-advocacy.
   - Children can be effective self-advocates when they are able to communicate needs and desires in a clear, concise manner.
   - Be positive about outcomes and be a partner in problem-solving.

10. Encourage good social skills.
   - Acknowledge the feeling of others.
   - Recognize and label facial expressions, body posture, and vocal cues.
   - Match expectations to reactions; misunderstandings are often easy to avoid when people agree on what is acceptable behavior.

11. Expect that mistakes will happen.
   - Help your child to appreciate that everyone makes mistakes; offer examples to decrease feelings of disappointment.
   - Talk about errors and mishaps openly; be objective and consider the context.
   - Explain that trial and error are valuable parts of the learning process.

12. Strive toward independence.
   - Encourage independence, particularly self-help skills and activities for daily living.
   - Encourage planning, risk taking, and evaluation of consequences; start with small decisions and provide feedback as an "interested observer." ■

GENERAL TIPS FOR PARENTS AT HOME

Parents have a pivotal role in encouraging the development of healthy self-esteem and in reinforcing learning. The following TIPS offer practical pointers which can help you and your child:

1. Let your child help with household tasks.
   - Select activities that are easily accomplished and contribute to building self-confidence.
   - Activities should be meaningful; children need to feel that their efforts are appreciated by the entire family.

2. Keep instructions clear and simple.
   - Break tasks into small steps; clarify language and demonstrate tasks as needed.
   - Create lists of steps to guide longer tasks.

3. Set routines.
   - Discuss desired outcomes and plan routines carefully.
   - Plan for breaks and talk about what to do when interruptions occur.
   - Consider time-off from special instruction and tutoring; be ready to offer activities and drills that promote retention of valuable skills and routines during extended vacations.

4. Minimize distractions.
   - Turn off the TV (or minimize watching during the school week).
   - Establish preferred places for work that are free of distractions.

5. Be patient and offer helpful reminders.
   - Forgetfulness is not intentional; reminders should be helpful (try not to pester).
   - Be sure that you have established attention (ie. eye contact, stop other activities) when offering explanations or reminders.

6. Reward efforts as well as work well done.
   - Positive feedback can be as simple as a smile or touch or as elaborate as a long-awaited gift or prize; try both!
   - Feedback should be immediate, and efforts made to connect praise with specific actions.
   - Praise, praise, praise!

7. Keep a sense of humor and maintain a positive outlook.
   - Keep expectations high but realistic.

8. Try not to nag.

9. Don't bribe with gifts and don't make promises that depend upon factors out of your control.

10. Read to your child and have your child read to you.
   - Don't worry about occasional mispronunciations; if you read for pleasure, reading will become pleasurable.

11. Keep the entire family in mind.
   - Don't let your child's needs become all consuming (parents and siblings are people too!).
   - Help other family members to understand the nature of learning disabilities and its consequences; find ways to involve siblings in a positive manner.

12. Be consistent.
   - Establish clear rules and be sure that everyone in the family understands them.
   - Be consistent with discipline and praise.

13. Don't be fooled.
   - Beware of claims that promise quick cures or miracle treatments; every child can learn, but rates of progress will vary; the road to improvement is paved by hard work.
   - Don't be swayed by unsubstantiated media reports; when in doubt, contact professionals who can offer well-documented information or can speak about research-validated practices.

14. Enjoy special times and friends.
   - Encourage your child to join with peers in social or sporting activities.
   - Seek out other parents with whom you can share experiences and gain new information. ■

STUDY SKILLS

Individuals with learning disabilities can greatly benefit from effective study skills. As children become more independent in their study habits, they must develop routines that make studying and learning easier and more enjoyable.

ORGANIZING MATERIALS

Help your child organize materials and information. Choose a method that is easy to implement and be consistent in its use.

■ Color coding can help organize materials; notebooks, dividers, binders, and folders are readily available in different colors; each subject or class period can be assigned a specific color.

■ Accordion folders and tabbed binders can separate work into different subject areas; sections can also organize information within a subject area (course syllabus, class notes, homework in progress, work completed, handouts).

■ Calendars and assignment books are essential for tracking projects; proper planning can ensure that your child does not fall behind or become overwhelmed by their workload; calendars can also keep track of other dates (birthdays, sleep-overs); these personal events are meaningful and should not conflict with needed study time.

CREATING AN ORGANIZED STUDY SPACE

Different people work best under different conditions and in different environments. What is helpful to some people can be a hindrance to others. Consistency and structure are key elements in creating an organized work space.

■ Determine environmental features that enhance attention and productivity: lighting, noise, music, leg room, table space for materials.

■ Determine whether particular supplies or equipment help (earplugs, slanting desk, brighter lamp, specific pen or pencil, special paper).

PLANNING EFFECTIVE USE OF TIME

Effective time management can increase productivity and decrease frustration.

■ Know your child's attention span and plan accordingly; anticipate the need for breaks; ensure that activities during these non-work periods will not make it difficult to return to the original task.

■ Identify preferred activities and prioritize. Help children stay in control of the work flow and use an organization plan.

■ Be available to answer questions and provide support: encourage independent work.

■ Break down large assignments into smaller, more manageable tasks; this allows your child to experience success along the way, and will help in the completion of long-term assignments.

■ Set personal due dates (earlier than actual dates) for assignments; allow time for revisions.

STUDYING WITH OTHERS

Parents, teachers, and peers can play different roles. Knowing how to best work with your child and helping your child work with others enhances productivity and enjoyment while learning.

■ Help children view teachers as resources and encourage them to ask questions, seek assistance and clarify assignments (request copies of handouts or for information to be repeated).

■ Be available to help with homework (problem-solving, devising strategies for overcoming frustrations, becoming adept at asking for help).

■ Working with peers can have academic and social benefits; encourage group activities; responsibility for getting work done and consideration for others are important for success.

OTHER HELPFUL IDEAS

■ Use index cards to record, organize, and study information.

■ Create charts, time-lines, and diagrams; these present information in a visually appealing and accessible format; these may also be a welcome addition to papers or class projects.

■ Children learn best when information is presented in various ways: involve different senses (seeing, hearing, touching) and use tape recorders, color coding and notes read aloud.

■ Make studying fun! Academic tasks can often be accomplished using game formats (word searches, flip-cards, bingo, hang-man); commercially available games are easily adapted for specific tasks (Scrabble, Boggle, Jeopardy). ■

INCLUSION

When properly planned and implemented, inclusionary education enhances academic opportunities for all students, those with and those without disabilities. In addition, it can provide benefits to children beyond academic learning and can help prepare them to live and work in a diverse world.

The successful inclusion of students with disabilities requires careful individualized planning regarding services and supports. These may include assistive technology, peer preparation, personal assistance services, paraprofessional support, or social integration planning.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL INCLUSION

1. Adopt a school-wide curriculum and make modifications for all children who need them.

2. Employ experiential, interactive educational methods that facilitate learning for all students.

3. Redeploy teaching and support personnel to meet the needs of the entire student population.

4. Engage all staff in working to ensure the success of all students.

5. Engage in collaborative planning with all of the stake-holders in the education of children with disabilities.

6. Be sure to address issues of transition and to include parents in every stage of the process.

7. Provide time for training, team-building, and planning so that staff and parents can work together for changes that will benefit students.

8. To the extent possible, treat all students equally (for example, have all students begin school on the same day).

9. Integrate students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers in educational programs as early as possible.

10. With the provision of reasonable accommodations, include students with disabilities in all system-wide assessments of educational performance and in public reporting of test results.

11. Identify and develop/acquire assistive technology for students in need, and make it available for use at home and in school.

12. Prepare peers for the inclusion of students with disabilities; this may need to be done on an individual basis.

13. Plan for the integration of support personnel in the classroom in ways that do not foster dependence or segregation; to the extent possible, assign service providers to classrooms or teachers, not to individual students.

14. Engage the families of students with disabilities in planning to facilitate the social integration of their children inside and outside the classroom.

15. Teach students with disabilities to self-advocate for their needs and to make use of the support services so they can achieve independence. ■

TECHNOLOGY AT HOME AND IN THE CLASSROOM

Computers are everywhere in today's society. They influence the business community, impact on our private lives and have entered the world of education. Computers are potentially powerful tools that can support academic and social learning and promote self-confidence, independence, and self-esteem.

Computers can be used to address many different areas of learning and development:

- language—reading and writing skills, comprehension
- cognition—problem-solving
- creativity—visual and verbal expression
- learning strategies—organizational skills, repair strategies
- academic subjects—English, social studies, science, math, foreign language
- independence—making decisions, self-directed learning

Determining which software to buy depends on both the needs of the user and the design of the program. When making selections, consider:

- age, abilities, and interests of those who will be using the software
- level of support needed to use the program effectively
- extent to which users are able to make choices and guide themselves through the program (interactivity)
- the intended outcomes: skill building, concept explanation, creativity

Hardware capabilities will determine which software can be used on your personal computer. Look for system requirements on software packages before you make your purchases.

- random access memory (RAM) needs to be large enough to run programs
- read only memory (ROM) needs to be large enough to store programs on your hard drive (the computer's "memory bank")
- megahertz (Mhz), speed that will determine how well many programs will run
- operating system; (Macintosh/Apple or Windows/DOS)—software must match the operating system of your personal computer
- format—many programs are available on both CD-rom and hard disk formats; choose the one which best suits your needs
- computer video and audio capabilities—make sure your computer can support both software requirements

Different types of equipment can expand the capabilities of your personal computer:

- modified equipment—simpler track-balls (in place of standard mouse); larger keyboards
- touch-sensitive screen; pointing devices

The Internet/World Wide Web (WWW) provide many exciting opportunities for learning. Users must enroll with an internet access provider, and have a modem and communications software installed on their personal computer.

Information about virtually any topic is readily available and can be obtained (downloaded) with ease. Users have access to an expansive network of individuals and institutions worldwide.

There are a number of sources for information regarding different hardware and software packages:

- a local computer store
- your child's school district
- scan educational resources catalogs
- local newspaper and magazines. ■

WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD BECOME A BETTER READER

Parents can have a strong positive influence on their child's reading. Research has shown that enjoying books with a child, for even a few minutes a day, can make a measurable difference in the acquisition of basic reading skills. Everyday activities, such as a trip to the grocery store, can be turned into enjoyable learning experiences.

The following is a list of ways in which parents can encourage the development of the skills needed by children in order for them to become good readers.

CREATE APPRECIATION OF THE WRITTEN WORD

■ **Find time to read aloud with your child every day.** Parents play an important role in developing this skill by reading to children and by showing how important reading is in daily life. Try to make books available for your child to explore and enjoy.

DEVELOP AWARENESS OF PRINTED LANGUAGE

■ **Teach about books.** When reading aloud, let your child open the book and turn the pages. Point to the words as you read. Draw attention to repeated phrases, inviting your child to join in each time they occur.

■ **Point out letters and words that you run across in daily life.** Make an obvious effort to read aloud traffic signs, billboards, notices, labels on packages, maps, and phone numbers. Make outings a way to encourage reading by showing your child how printed words relate to daily living.

ENCOURAGE LEARNING THROUGH DAILY ACTIVITIES

■ **Play alphabet games.** Sing the alphabet song to help your children learn letters as you play with alphabet books, blocks, and magnetic letters. A-B-C, dot-to-dots and letter-play workbooks, games, and puzzles are available at most toy stores. There are also many engaging computer games designed for teaching children letters. Make sure these toys are available to your children even when you are unable to play with them.

■ **Watch *Sesame Street* or other educational programs with your children.** Show them how to sing along, answer the riddles, and engage actively in its fun.

■ **Make writing materials available to children.** Encourage children to write their names and other important words or phrases. Help them to gradually learn how to write more and more letters. At first, most children find it easier to write uppercase letters.

UNDERSTAND THE RELATION OF LETTERS AND WORDS

■ **Teach your children how to spell a few special words,** such as their own names, "stop", or "exit." Draw attention to these and other frequently occurring words as you read books with your children. Challenge them to read these words as they arise or to search them out on a page. Play word-building games with letter tiles or magnetic letters. Let them build strings of letters for you to try to read.

UNDERSTAND THAT LANGUAGE IS MADE OF WORDS, SYLLABLES AND SOUNDS

■ **Sing songs and read rhyming books.** Sing the alphabet and teach songs that emphasize rhyme and alliteration, such as *Willaby Wallaby Woo* and *Down By the Sea.* Emphasize the sounds as you sing. Play rhyming games and clap out syllables in words. Change the word order of familiar poems and challenge them to detect the error. Talk like robots, syllable by syllable.

■ **Play word games.** Challenge children to play with words. For example, think of words that rhyme with "bat" or begin with "m." What would be left if you took the "p" sound out of "pat"? What would you have if you put these sounds together: "p" and "ickle"; "m" and "ilk"; and "s, a, t". Which of these words starts with a different sound: *bag, ball, candy, bike?* Do *boat* and *baby* start with the same sound?

Continued on page 126.

WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD BECOME A BETTER READER

Continued from page 125.

TEACH LETTER SOUNDS

■ **Sound out letters.** Point out words that begin with the same letters as your children's names, drawing attention to the similarities of their initial sounds. Use alphabet books, computer games, or word games (such as "I'm thinking of something that starts with b") to engage them in alliterative and letter-sound play. When reading books that contain alliteration and rhyme, such as Dr. Seuss books, sound out rhyming words or challenge children to do so. Play word games using sounds with syllables such as: If this spells "cat", how do you spell "hat"?

SOUND OUT NEW WORDS

■ **Point out new words.** Say the sound while touching each letter in a new word. For example, say "s-u-n" and then blend them to create the word. Use predictable words with common sounds and spellings, e.g. use "fun" or "sat" instead of "night" or "saw."

■ **Encourage spelling by saying each sound** in the words and then writing the letters that goes with those sounds.

■ **Encourage children to spell.** After your children have learned to pronounce letters and words, have them match letters and sound.

■ **Promote independent writing.** Encourage your children to write, allowing them to use inventive or creative spelling. At this stage, they will often omit letters and confuse letter names with letter sounds, producing such spellings as *LFNT* for *elephant*, *BN* for *bean*, *YOTR* for *water*, and *FARE* for *fairy*. Be sure to praise children for their efforts and products.

BUILD READING SKILLS

■ **Help children to enjoy easy, readable stories as often as possible.** Sit with them, take turns reading and encourage discussion. Invite them to read familiar words and progress to reading phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. At the end of each section or story, revisit words that caused trouble. Reread stories as a powerful way to reinforce learning.

IDENTIFY SPELLING PATTERNS

■ **Point out similarities among words** such as *will*, *fill*, and *hill* or *light*, *night*, and *sight*. Help children to learn and review common spelling patterns in the words they write.

TEACH TO READ REFLECTIVELY

■ **Pause for discussion as you read.** Stop frequently to discuss language, content, and relevance to real life. Explore the meanings of new words, use them in other sentences, and contrast their meaning with words that have similar meanings. Make an effort to revisit new words and concepts. While reading, pause to discuss characters, problems, and events in the story. Invite children to think about how problems might be solved or imagine what might happen next. Ask children to review what has happened, drawing attention to the important elements of the story. ■

Editor's Note: This document was adapted from material provided by the National Center to Improve the Tools of Educators, in cooperation with the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Office of Special Education Programs.

OTHER TIPS?

Would you like to see other TIPS on additional topics? Please call or write NCLD with your suggestions.

The Pittsburgh Steelers
congratulate NCLD
for their
work with children.

PLEASE HELP THE **NATIONAL CENTER FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES** CONTINUE TO HELP YOU AND OTHERS

BECOME AN NCLD MEMBER and receive:

- The annual publication *Their World*
- NCLD's newsletter *NCLD News* (4 times annually)
- Periodic *News Alerts* on timely topics
- Invitations to and/or proceedings from NCLD's Regional and National Summits
- A national perspective on current trends and issues in the field
- Regular access to NCLD's resource database
- A special packet of information on learning disabilities *(new members only)*

> YES, please count me in as a **new member:** ❍ Individual $35 ❍ Institutional $50 ❍ Foreign $60

> YES, please **renew** my annual NCLD membership: ❍ Individual $35 ❍ Institutional $50 ❍ Foreign $60

BECOME AN NCLD SPECIAL SUPPORTER

> YES, I would like to support NCLD's programs by becoming:

❍ **Sponsor** $50 to $100 ❍ **Patron** $100 to $250 ❍ **Honorary Patron** $250 or more

> I would like my tax-deductible donation to directly support NCLD's programs in:

❍ National Information & Referral ❍ Education Programs ❍ Public Awareness & Advocacy

❍ Enclosed is $6 for each additional copy of *Their World 1996/1997*.
Bulk rates are available for conferences and teacher training. Call NCLD at (212) 545-7510.

I AM:

❍ Parent of a child with learning disabilities ❍ Adult with learning disabilities
❍ Teacher: _General _Special Ed _Vocational _University _Other:_____
❍ Other (please explain)_____

Name *(please print)*

Organization Title

Address

City State Zip Phone

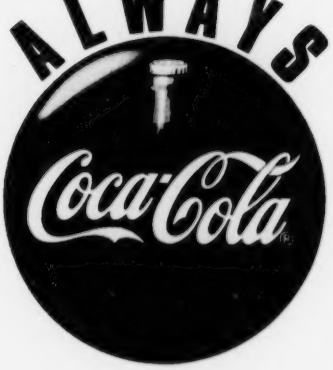
Thank you for your support!
Please make checks payable to NCLD and return to:
Attn. TW-96/97, 381 Park Avenue South, Suite 1420, New York, NY 10016
For further information call (212) 545-7510.

NCLD is a national, not-for-profit, voluntary organization and is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. The direct cost of materials received by members is estimated at $20, and is not tax-deductible.

In recognition of the

National Center For Learning Disabilities

whose understanding,
commitment and patience
provide valuable assistance
to children with
learning disabilities.



© 1993 The Coca-Cola Company. "Coca-Cola," the Dynamic Ribbon device and the Contour Bottle design are registered trademarks of The Coca-Cola Company.